

Autumn 2009

Friends of
Rushcliffe Country Park

Issue 45

Our New Maze



The photo shows our new maze complete with 515 tyres.

It took a total of 1,061 hours to Dismantle the old log maze; Measure, rotovate, weed, level, & mark out the new design; Collect, grade & install the tyres; Weed & woodchip the maze; Renovate the entrance archway.

All done by the following people:

FORCP = 674

Probationer Service = 170

Church of the Latter Day Saints = 102

Volunteer Rangers = 84 (Chris Davis = 65)

Work Experience = 19

Pupil Inclusion Unit = 8

Duke of Edinburgh Scheme = 4

A huge thank you to all involved.

All the hard work felt worthwhile when, seeing the disappointment in the children's faces, when the maze was not ready, turn to delight when it finally was. **Zoe**



Last tyre in maze laid by Chris Davis, Jack Aldridge Deacon and Chris's ever attentive dog Timmy



New Archway into tyre maze

'FRIENDS' TRIP TO EDALE

Early July saw 13 Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park visiting Upper Booths Farm in Edale for a working holiday. The camp site is on a National Trust owned farm near Kinder Scout and as you would expect, in beautiful surroundings.

Normally the views are outstanding but in this instance the rain bearing clouds clung to the hill tops like leaches for most of the time we were there.

It was great fun, accommodation being under canvas which was arranged in a large circle with everyone converging on Zoe's tent from 6 a.m. onwards for an early morning cup of tea or coffee.

Breakfast was around 9 a.m. which we usually had in the barn because of the inclement weather. This set us up for the jobs ahead. We had a variety to choose from, including putting up fencing, erecting new gates and posts and dry stone walling. We all met the challenge head on and had a very interesting time.

New skills were learnt and existing ones improved. We were rewarded at the end of the first two days by a B-B-Q and the third evening a 3 mile return walk across the moors to Edale for a pub dinner and celebratory drinks. The 4th day we used our carbon footprints and drove to the hostelry.

We also learnt you did not catch a cold having got wet! Also I did not think midges bit when it was wet, wrong, they did. Despite loads of insect repellent, they had a good meal at our expense.

We had a big age range and the younger members were surprised at the elder generations turn of phrase!! One lady 'Friend' had a penchant for visiting the mens' loo in the morning but only to see what variety of moths had settled in during the night!

Several of the boys had some surplus energy and decided to climb Jacobs Ladder late at night. Some arrived back safe and sound without any modern technical aides but one who had emptied a bottle or two of wine but had Sat Nav equipment came back very loud after getting lost!

As you can imagine we had a lora, lora laughs, lots of fun and we all got on like a house on fire.

I think we all want to give Zoe a big thank you for organising the trip and keeping us all on the straight and narrow AND we are going back next year for more.

Dorothy Pearson

13 Friends of Rushcliffe to Edale went

And for our sins we camped in tents
Ranger Zoe organised the trip for us all
Some of us knew we were to have a ball
Lots of midges who had not eaten for days
No mobile phone signal was the frequent phrase

Our ages ranged from fifteen to seventy
Adult talk and laughs there were a-plenty
Farmer Robert showed us round the farm
A kindly man with a lot of charm
Then he told us the jobs to be done
Wow they were going to be such fun

Headquarters was Zoe's big tent
Where at 6.30a.m. most of us went
Morning coffee or tea was an enjoyable sight
But some were bothered they would give a fright

If make up and lipstick were not put on
And even a dressing gown which was long

Most days the hills were shrouded in mist
Most call it rain, but you get the gist
But hey, us Friends we are made of stern stuff
Show us the jobs, and we take the tough with the rough
Putting fence posts up did no harm
And if it rained we were near the barn
But no the boss said the job has to be done
Did you know soaking wet is such fun
Emptying boots and squeezing shirts
At least we forgot which bits of us hurt

Our favourite task is dry stone walling
Some of us already had the calling
It takes practice and skill
To place one stone off the steep hill

EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY!

Coffee, teas and home made cakes has had a steady success over the summer, with no clear pattern of what makes a good day or a poor day, but those who come seem to enjoy the experience! Which all adds to the success of the Country Park. I am grateful to all those who have helped.

Our 'First Sundays' have become rather muddled up to Christmas due to other bookings in the room, but I hope the signs around the Country Park will clarify our dates of 27th September, [as neither the 4th or 11th October were available], 1st November and 13th December.

From January 3rd, 2010, we plan to stick closely to the 'First Sunday' and hope we can cover other events as well.

On Sunday December 13th we will coincide with the Rainbows Santa Run and offer mince pies, too. It was decided at our meeting that we would hold an extra fund raising event that day with RCP themed gift ideas. We have already had the fantastic offer of original paintings of some of the wild flowers in our park! Please make other offers and ideas to the committee so that this will add some interesting Christmas presents and boost our funds, too.

Our list of helpers for these dates is increasing but we still could use some more to spread the load so please do not hesitate to offer by giving your name and contact number to one of the Rangers, any of the Friends or ring me on 9375528. In the meantime do drop in to try our coffee and cakes on 27 Sept, 1st November or especially December 13th after you have enjoyed a walk round our beautiful Park! **Sue Jackson**

Training Session for Sunday Coffee and Cakes

Wednesday 21st October in the Education Room
from 10.00 - 12.00.

You are invited to come and enjoy a coffee and cake and discuss the First Sunday sessions in THE room. Open to all who are, or may be, interested in helping occasionally or regularly.

Sue Jackson and Dorothy Pearson.

Slowly course by course the wall w
But as it was raining we drank tea b
A critical eye by the boss is cast
'This structure we hope will last and
As old and new begin to impercepti
Our spirits continue to surge and su
In the end we did quite a brilliant jo
It has to be said by all the mob

One evening much to our concern
4 lads had too much energy to burn
So up Jacobs ladder they went for a
3 had no sat nav and were down in
The other, oh dear had too much to
And sorry to say his sat nav was on
Perhaps the gadget was not to blame
Alas that person will never be the s

WILDLIFE UPDATE

Since July, 15 more species have been identified. These comprise 9 moths, 4 wild flowers, 1 beetle and best of all, 1 new butterfly - Brown Argus.

Our grand total of species now stands at 1090 with 71 found so far this year.

Another surprise was finding a patch of Pennyroyal, a rare member of the mint family, near the entrance gates to the park on July 19th. On checking the national status of this plant it was found to be specially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The Grounds Maintenance team are now banned from mowing there under pain of death.

It has been reported to Peter Acton, the botanist at Wollaton Hall (where the County Records are kept).

Another record of the Waved Black moth, recorded on 1st August, was not so encouraging. It was found dead in a spiders web on the outside wall of the workshop building.

Swan Update

We are in the process of trying to ring all the new brood - only one to go plus the new male. **Mike**

RUSHCLIFFE LABYRINTH - PATHWAY TO A RICHER COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

We marked out a temporary seven-circuit labyrinth for the Rush4Health event on 5 July. Keith had acquired a white liner, Roger raked away the mown grass, and I set up the measuring equipment. It was finished within an hour and John Y, after leading his walking group, was too late to record it on film although Roger did manage to get a picture or two.

On the day several friends helped with manning the location and talking with visitors. The idea was to gauge the interest of the general public to help with preparing our funding application. We had a wonderful day. Children ran and cycled it and adults were curious - but because there is no labyrinth close by, many people were a little mystified. They asked: "What is a labyrinth?" Unlike a maze, labyrinths have only one path from the entrance to the centre and back again. There is no puzzle to solve, but as you journey, it gives you time to think. "Who might use it?" Everyone can - groups and individuals, children and adults. "When might we use it?" For joyous and solemn occasions, games and play, parties and celebrations, meditation and prayer, dance and joy walks, problem solving and healing, and faith and festivals, to name a few. Everyone we spoke to warmed to the idea as we discussed it with them. Significantly, 264 people signed our petition to say they were interested in using a labyrinth at the park.

My thoughts on the design changed quite a lot as a result of this process. First, the path width of 3 feet proved to be too narrow for easy cycling and wheelchair use: 4-5 feet will be better. At 37 yards across, the original idea of an eleven-circuit labyrinth is too large with the wider path and the time taken to walk its 0.66 miles is too long. Indeed seven-circuits with a wider path is as big as we had planned for the eleven-circuit one with a narrower path - 22 yards. Big enough! To minimize maintenance, paving brick 'walls' finished at ground level will separate the wide, flat, hard-surfaced paths. A new access path will link to existing paths. Nearby benches with trees for shade, a central stone/rock doubling as a seat, and a display board linking it to a replica finger labyrinth at Bradmore Community Hall will feature in our funding application to the 'Big Lottery Awards for All' programme. It is now close to completion and we should hear the result within 6 weeks of submitting it. If successful, excavation will start in the New Year. Watch this space!

It is still not too late for more people to support our funding application by voting. If you lead a children's, youth or adult group then we ask you to complete a simple survey form. You can vote or complete a survey form by visiting the Friends web site at HYPERLINK "<http://www.friends-of-rfp.co.uk>" www.friends-of-rfp.co.uk where Chris D has also posted more information on labyrinths. Have a look. Otherwise call at the visitor centre to sign the petition there.

John Randall EMBED Word.Picture.8 Seven-circuit, classical labyrinth

PARK MODEL

It is now four years since the model of the park was built. It has been very popular with our visitors and has helped to communicate the layout of the park. Danced on by vandals and attacked by the weather, it became rather forlorn and in need of TLC.

During August I removed the surface and renewed the fibreglass surface. Then with Pat's help we repainted it with acrylics and finally sealed with two coats of resin. Thanks to Gordon for treating the log base. A sign beside the model is planned to act as a key.

I hope it will serve the park for several years with minimum maintenance and continue to assist our visitors.

Roger Byrne

t up
the cup

st
y merge

There was a young lady whose back was not good
Her hobby was looking for moths if she could
Each morning she found the men's loo was great
Such varieties could be seen and the men had to wait

The camaraderie between the friends was great
Gates hung, fences replaced and fixed next year's date

Yes, we are going through this again gang
I bet more will join us for next year's plan

A NON E MOUSE

ie

Rushcliffe Country Park

WORK DAYS

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

The Friends' Work Days will be held every **Wednesday and Saturday** from **Saturday 3rd October 2009 - Wednesday 30th December 2009**

New Volunteers and Members always welcome. See tasks below.

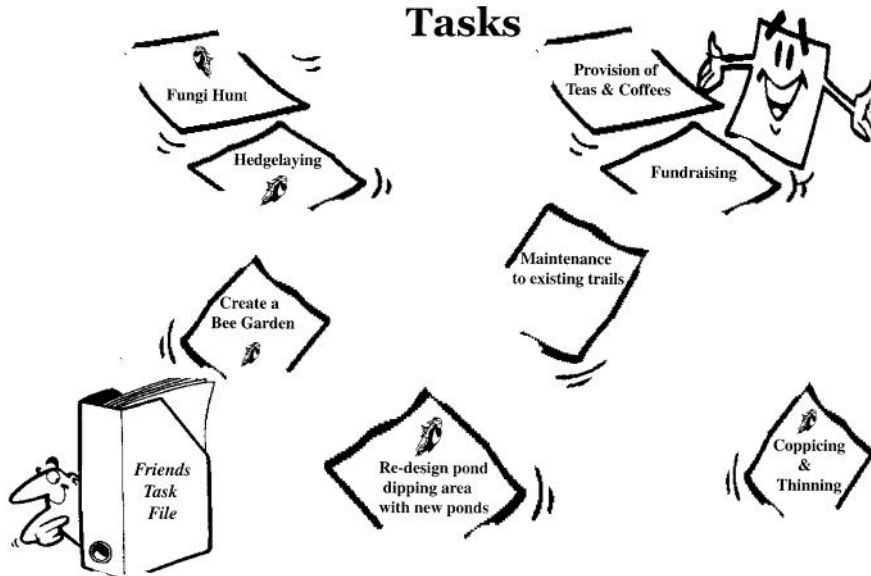
Notable Dates

FORCP Meeting - Wed 4th November 2009 - 1.30pm RCP

Bird Ringing: Every Sunday from 1st November until further notice.

Weather Permitting

Tasks



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.

Produced by the Friends of Rushcliffe Country Park

Website: www.friends-of-rccp.co.uk

Registered Charity No 1079665



Supported by



An independent group associated with
BTCV
a registered charity

No one could be sure if it was the endless hours of toil, the blazing sun or the rubber fumes but as workers started to lose their 'grip' the maze madness crept in and the *tyre-d* old puns were 'wheeled' out

A good deal of planning was done first overseen by a project '*steering*' group and it was decided early on that 2009 would be a '*goodyear*' for the maze's '*remould*'. As the digging progressed all sorts of things were unearthed – bones of a creature thought to be an ancient *Tyre-annosarus rex* and remains of an earlier maze - Greek in design thought to have stalked thousands of years ago by the fearsome *Mino-tyre!* But soon the new maze started to take shape.

A great many folk took part; in fact the maze soon became a '*hub*' of activity. A large amount of work was done by the infamous Friends many of whom are *re-tyred*, others did their part but preferred to keep a '*low profile*'. Safety was of course paramount everyone was to '*wear*' the correct *at-tyre* for the job and be sure not to '*tread*' on each others toes. There was no shirking on quality either, although some thought her a *tyre-ant* Zoe worked '*flat*'-out '*pumping up*' the '*pressure*' to ensure every tyre went in the right place.

Tyres were installed from the out side in and also in a more '*radial*' fashion but even when we'd '*dunlops*' and lots of digging there was still more to do but no one got too '*crossply*' about it. Eventually though the tyre maze was finished and without wanting to '*inflate*' anyone's ego or '*retread*' over congratulations already made I'd like to say well done to everyone who carried on even when feeling '*deflated*' or just '*2 tyred*' to continue.

Chris Davis