

Gunton Woodland Community Project

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NEWSLETTER

May – June 2015



Gunton Wood

As usual the last two months have been very busy, so we are particularly pleased to welcome 3 new members - Peter and Marion Smith and Colin Tyler.



We have had quite a lot of storm damage so much tidying up of fallen branches and dead trees has been needed. Some of them have been used to replace rotten path edging and some for repairs to the fencing around the pond. We have to try and stop dogs from getting into the pond, because in the past we have had problems with their claws damaging the liner and causing leaks. We also had a problem with the pond for a few weeks when there appeared to be no life in it. However, over the last couple of weeks the schoolchildren have been pond dipping and have reported quite a lot of life in there now.

Some of the ladies have been very busy in "Wally's B&B" (the bee & butterfly area). Most of the wildflowers have now been transplanted from the nursery and have been marked with canes and, in some cases, protected with shields. The grass does seem to be taking over, but we are trying to clear areas around the new flowers and also the trees that have been planted. There is a lovely show of orchids at the moment, both in the bee & butterfly area and in the wildflower meadow. The foxgloves near the pond have also been lovely, although they are dying off a bit now. The bluebells gave a good display again and some of us spent one or two Thursdays pulling up Spanish bluebells to try and stop them taking over. We do seem to be keeping them under control. A team have also been trying to pull up the docks that are threatening to take over the wild flower meadow, but it is just a question of doing the best we can, because they are very insistent !



A team of men have spent some time clearing the railway path, using the motorised hedge trimmer and the lawnmower. The pathway is quite wide and clear now and all that remains to be done is to keep the overhanging branches under control. Some of the men have also done a really good job of building and painting the new fence around the nursery. The old one was falling down and has been replaced with picket fencing kindly donated by two of our workers, Janet & Mike. Some fencing is left over and might be used to repair the fence between Church Wood and the burial ground.



The warm weather has encouraged everything to grow rapidly, so we have been busy keeping the path edges clear. We started off using scythes, but decided that they were too destructive and indiscriminate, so have now reverted to pulling nettles, clipping brambles and lopping overhanging branches. Hopefully this way we will preserve the other flowers and plants along the edges.

We have recently had two very welcome visitors to the woods. Barbara Colman joined us for a Thursday morning work party the day before the group went off to Kent. Barbara had booked to go on the trip, so came up a day early in order to join us in the wood. It was good to see her and hear all about her new home in Devon. We didn't miss the opportunity to get her working, particularly at coffee time when, after her familiar "COFFFEEEE" call, we asked her to pass the cakes around. David had provided the cakes for his impending birthday and he treated us to a short cabaret act to celebrate ! Our other visit was from June Sedgely, one of the founding members of GWCP, who came along to celebrate her 90th birthday. Unfortunately, June is not able to join us on Thursdays anymore, but for this special occasion, David went to

collect her and brought her down for coffee in her wheelchair and she brought along a lovely chocolate cake for us to share. It was a real treat to see June out in the wood again and she thoroughly enjoyed seeing everyone and having a chat.



Social Events

Kent Trip - Friday May 8th to 11th 2015

On Friday 8th May 2015, 47 members and friends travelled by coach to Kent with Gwen our driver. We arrived and boarded the Kentish Lady for our 3 hour cruise on the river Medway, with a fish and chip lunch aboard. We then journeyed on to The Marriott Tudor Park Hotel in Maidstone which proved to be an excellent venue. Next day after breakfast we set off to take a train ride on the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch narrow gauge railway and then travelled on to Hythe. We arrived in heavy rain, but our driver Gwen saved the day by arranging with the hotel, where we were due to have a cream tea later in the afternoon, to accept us early and they made us very welcome. The scones and tea were delightful. Hythe being quite a small town with not a lot to see, Gwen said that she would drive along the coast to Folkestone where we could walk round the street market or along the sea front. By the time we arrived, the sun had come out ! Then back to the hotel for a rest before dinner. Next day we set off for our visit to Penshurst Place where we had a guided tour of the house then cake and tea or coffee, followed by a tour of the gardens with the Head Gardener. A sunny day which made it all an excellent experience. We packed for our return journey home and set off to The Historic Chatham Dockyards where we had free time to explore all the maritime exhibits.

In all the group said it was one of the best trips ever with time to relax back at our hotel each day.



Framlingham Castle & Shawsgate Vineyard - Thursday June 18th



There was no work party on Thursday June 18th as most of the group were on a coach trip to Framlingham.

35 of us left Gunton Church Lane shortly after 8.30am and arrived at Framlingham Castle just before 10am, a short wait for the ticket office to open and then we all wandered in to the Castle. We had till midday to look around the Castle and enjoy the "Wall Walk", exhibitions and cafe, or wander into Framlingham to check out the shops.

From midday the group started arriving at the Castle Inn pub, next door to the castle itself, and helped themselves to the lovely buffet set out in our own private room. Most people chose to settle down in the pub courtyard for lunch, so they could enjoy the lovely sunshine. By 2pm we were all boarded back on the coach for the very short journey to Shawsgate Vineyard. Here we were

greeted by the owner Les and, after an initial chat, we were handed over to Graham to take us on a very interesting and informative tour of the vineyard, finishing with a quick look at the winery. After a short break we all took our seats in the large marquee and settled down to the wine tasting. We were supposed to be tasting 5 wines but as Shawsgate had just won an award for one of their sparkling wines, this was added on as a special treat. After tasting all 6 wines we were then given time to visit the shop before once again boarding our coach for the journey home. Unfortunately, the A12 was closed between Southwold and Wrentham, which made for an interesting journey home using narrow country lanes till we made our way back to the A12 at Wrentham. We arrived back home about 6.30pm.

Bingo Fish & Chips Night – Thursday September 17th 2015

Snape Christmas Show - Saturday December 12th 2015

Windsor Trip - Friday May 6th to 9th 2016

} **For more details**
} **contact David or**
} **Rosemary Briggs**

FaceBook

We now have a new FaceBook Page, called "GWCP - Gunton Woodland Community Project" to differentiate us from an existing FB page called "Gunton Wood". In making these changes we have lost most of our photos and videos but they will be uploaded again as soon as possible.

Thank You

We would like to thank Jackie Channing and her family for their very generous donation of £670.50 in memory of Brian, who was one of the founders of GWCP. We hope Gunton Woodland will continue to be a fitting memorial to him.

We would also like to thank Wally Crowther, who has very kindly donated the funds to buy 2 pairs of heavy-duty overhead loppers and most of the wildflowers for the bee and butterfly area, both very much appreciated.

In Memoriam

We are very sorry to have to report the death of one of our former workers, Dick Armstrong. Dick worked with the group for several years, before leaving to work with Suffolk Wildlife on the Gunton Meadow Nature reserve. Dick was a valued member of GWCP and his woodworking skills were admired by all. Dick was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2014 and sadly, after a hard battle, he passed away on 16th May 2015. Dick's wife, Linda, is still one of our regular Thursday morning workers and we all send her and her sons and their families, our deep and heartfelt sympathy.