

FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE



April 2009

# Northcliffe News

## **SPRING FLOWER AND TREE IDENTIFICATION WALK**

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2009

Walk leader Veronica Youngson

Please meet at Cliffe Wood Avenue car park at 1.45pm for a 2 pm start.

Duration around 2 hours, please wear suitable clothes and shoes.

## **DAWN CHORUS WALK**

Hugh Firman will lead the walk in Old Spring Woods on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

Please assemble at 4.30 am just inside the Old Spring Woods at the end of Lynton Drive. So as not to disturb our neighbours please do not drive up Lynton Drive. Parking is extremely limited, especially at 4.30am!

Please walk or park nearby.

The walk will last about one hour.

Bring a flask and breakfast bun unless you want to rush back to bed at the end of the walk!

## **Bat Walk**

We hope to announce a date in the next News letter or in the press

## **RAE GALA 2009**

Sunday 14th June – info inside

## **Committee meetings**

7pm at the Kirkgate Community Centre, Shipley

*Members and prospective members are welcome at all the meetings.*

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2009

*Ian Day Parks & Recreational Spaces Manager is hoping to attend this meeting with the new woodlands manager.*

## **Annual General Meeting**

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009

## **BRADFORD URBAN WILDLIFE GROUP**

Thursday 23 April 2009

“English Country Lanes” by Elizabeth Chidsey

Talk and presentation at Shipley Library at 7.30pm

## **Useful Information**

For further information please visit our web-site at:

[www.friendsofnorthcliffe.co.uk](http://www.friendsofnorthcliffe.co.uk)

To see a colour version of the Newsletter go to the web-site, **Events and News** page,  
**keyword is:** woods

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## **Front Cover**

A reminder that global warming does not necessarily mean warmer winters.

## **CHANGES TO COMMITTEE: THIS IS IMPORTANT SO PLEASE READ!**

This year a number of us are not standing again for the committee. I am standing down as Chair after 10 years and Margaret Walker is standing down as Treasurer after even longer than my years as Chair. Joan Stevens has put her name forward as the new Treasurer – thank you Joan – but we do not have a volunteer to take the Chair.

Margaret joined the committee in 1992 and became Treasurer in 1997

I am sure everyone would want to join me in a very sincere thanks to Margaret for all her years doing our accounts and keeping our membership records – together with all her very regular attendances at committee meetings. Thank you Margaret!

It's also a great blow to the organisation that Keith Scott has decided to retire from editing Northcliffe News. He took over from me some years ago and transformed it with his great photography. Thank you Keith for your photography and for your great patience in getting articles together! Keith is staying on in charge of the website much to our relief.

The good news is that Lisa Firman is standing for the committee and has volunteered to take over Northcliffe News. Lisa was editor all those years ago before I took over and it's great that she has volunteered to take up her old role – thank you Lisa.

*But we do need a new Chair!!* This is a great opportunity for Friends of Northcliffe to take a change of direction if that is needed. If you'd like to see changes, or to see it keeps going then please consider volunteering for the committee. You might not want to take on the Chair immediately but might want to consider joining and reinforcing the committee.

Colin Wood has also decided not to continue as Conservation Officer and not to stand again for the committee. Once again, a thank you to Colin for your years on the committee and for taking on this role.

*So we need a new conservation officer.* The purpose of the role is to organise working days up in Northcliffe, such as sapling and Himalayan Balsam clearance, and to be the liaison person with the Council on conservation matters. This is a really important role and so much could be done by someone with the interest and the time to get things going.

My years as Chair have been important to me and I have gained a lot of satisfaction from working for Northcliffe. It's also been frustrating too, especially the last 3 years, when my job has taken so much of my energy and time and Northcliffe time has been reduced. It's bee great working with the committee members; they're a great bunch of people and I recommend you join the committee if for nothing else but their friendship and good times together. Working together towards the goal of preserving Northcliffe and aiming to interest local people in its existence and preservation has been has been hard work, tiring, sometimes frustrating – but great!

**Jenny Cassidy, Chair**

### **Conservation work in Northcliffe**

If we want to do conservation work in Northcliffe – and this is what we should aim to do - then the removal of beech saplings in Northcliffe and Old Spring Woods is the number one priority.

Interested in helping? Interested in getting fresh air and exercise for free? Then contact by email or phone so we can set up enjoyable working groups to help preserve our wonderful Northcliffe.

## **AGM**

All members are invited to the **Annual General Meeting** of Friends of Northcliffe, which will be held on Tuesday 2 June 2009 at Kirkgate Community Centre, Kirkgate, Shipley, starting at 7.00pm.

## **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 2008 A.G.M.
3. Chair's Annual Report
4. Treasurer's Annual Report
5. Membership and membership rates
6. Election of Officers - *please see details below*
7. Plans and planning for the year ahead
8. Any other business

## **COMMITTEE ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THE AGM**

The current committee members have put themselves forward for re-election -

Jenny Burnell

June Carter

Joan Newman

Sheila Parkin - as Secretary and Deputy Chair

Keith Scott - as website editor

Tracy Wood

Joan Stevens – as Treasurer

Marlene Young

Margot Rowan

**How about joining the committee?** – you will see from the article about changes to the committee by Jenny, the Chair that there are vacancies on the commit that need to be filled. Why not give it a try – please consider it and contact either Jenny Cassidy or Sheila Parkin before the AGM.

If you don't fancy joining the committee – or are unsure about whether you would like to or not – don't forget that our monthly committee meetings are open to all members.

Dates of the meetings are published in the Newsletter.

Annual subscriptions FOR 09/10 are now due. They can be paid to the Treasurer by post (her address is on the back page) or at the AGM or at the Gala.

## Changes in Management Regime in Northcliffe Park

The Parks and Recreational Department of Bradford Council are considering the adoption of a change in the management regime for parts of Northcliffe Park (The Norman Rae Playing Fields for those of you who like the old name). The Friends of Northcliffe committee is very much in favour of the proposal and this was repeated at the Neighbourhood Forum held on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February at Northcliffe Church.

The plan is to turn parts of the open area into meadowland with maintaining swaths cut through as footpaths and to maintain a tidy boundary. Ian Day, the Parks and Recreational Spaces Manager, suggests the initial area could be the undulating open land on the right side of the park (when viewed from Shipley) above the play area. This seems a good area to us too.

The proposal would promote and encourage biodiversity, reduce fuel costs (carbon footprint) for the park and we think will provide an interesting and stimulating new environment for walkers. The Council's intention is to place information boards to explaining the context to educate people about the rationale for the change and the benefits inherent within it.

Ian hopes that if it is successful in Northcliffe it could be applied to other sites across the district. The photo below is of Kensington Gardens in London where a similar approach has been taken by the Royal Parks.

Do tell us what you think or go direct to Ian at [ian.day@bradford.gov.uk](mailto:ian.day@bradford.gov.uk) or phone 431988.

Message from the editor:

The picture below is of Northcliffe after the first cut, instead of Kensington Gardens.



# ANNUAL RAE GALA

SUNDAY 14th JUNE 2009

2.00pm - 4.30pm

IN NORTHCLIFFE WOODS  
ENTRANCE THROUGH CLIFFE WOODS AVENUE CAR PARK  
OFF BRADFORD ROAD

ADMISSION FREE

DISABLED PARKING

ATTRACTI0NS INCLUDE -

*The music and the dancers -*

HALL ROYD BAND

New to Rae Gala Dance Troupes

*The attractions -*

GRAND COCONUT SHY

INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE TENT

FACE PAINTING

BUTTERFLY DISPLAY

*The animals -*

THE BUNNY SANCTUARY

HEDGEHOG RESCUE

HOWARD TOLL AND HIS OWL

BLACKPOOL DONKEY

*The stalls -*

SWEETS-IN-A-JAR

CAKES

BRIC-A-BRAC

PLANTS - by the Northcliffe Project

ICE CREAM AND REFRESHMENTS



Shipley Starlights and Pom Pom Troupe

## NORTHCLIFFE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

An oasis in the middle of an urban district. With beautiful parkland on one side, and ancient woodland on the other, Northcliffe Allotments indeed offer an escape from the pressures of modern living.

The site itself consists of 125 allotments. Approximately ten of these are taken up by a project for young people with learning difficulties, training them in horticulture. A further ten have been developed as a small wildlife centre, and three more are used by the council as a manure and associated materials depot. The Society has an excellent relationship with all these projects. Remaining plots have been taken over by individuals who grow their own vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers very successfully.

Although Northcliffe Allotment Society had been formed quite a few years ago, it had fallen into a decline and no meetings had been held for almost two years. Four years ago, with the revival of interest in 'Growing Your Own' and the advent of many new tenants on to the site, it was decided to resurrect the Society. Almost every tenant on the site attended the first meeting which was a great success.

Over the next year a development plan was formed and implemented by members, with aims and objectives prioritised according to their wishes. The first task to be undertaken was the clearance of approximately 24 of the allotments which were completely overgrown and to this end we enlisted the help of the Park's department who did a wonderful job turning jungles into manageable plots. At the same time we cleared the site of asbestos, this too being a priority issue.

Scaffolding boards were sourced at a very reasonable price which enabled tenants to construct raised beds, making gardening so much easier, especially as the allotments are situated on clay, in an extremely wet area. Other materials were likewise sourced and sold on to tenants with a small profit margin to cover costs and to help with fund raising. Discount prices were arranged with local businesses, which also support the Society by donating raffle prizes for fund raising, and office equipment to make administration easier.

To encourage the community spirit, several events were organised, the main two being the summer social and the November bonfire. Barbeques were brought out at both events and were extremely popular. These have now become annual events. In summer there is a special emphasis on the children of tenants with lots of games and activities in an enclosed area where they can play safely. Both these events are very well attended and form a large part of our fund-raising. Occasionally, if there is lots of rubbish to dispose of, which is not suitable for recycling, we have an informal 'burn up' where once again we pull out the barbeque, have a raffle and a pleasant evening just socialising.

Money raised from these events has enabled us to complete the second and third priorities on our list, the purchase of machinery which is rented out to tenants for a small fee, and a storage facility. Having a pool of good equipment saves tenants having to purchase their own, which is impractical when it is only used once or twice a year.

The last item on our development plan was the building of a clubhouse where we could store paperwork, have a library, do plant and seed swaps and hold committee meetings. This is now at the 'in-progress' stage. We have received funding for this project from Bradford Council's Community Fund, the Ward Investment Fund, and Cnet's Grassroots Fund. We have had so much support from the Council, Councillors Love and Warnes, and everyone involved in the grant application processes.

In the meantime, once the development plan was well underway, a change in the format of our meetings was needed, to prevent boredom and stimulate the members. Accordingly, we decided to arrange a series of gardening related lectures and these have proved very popular. We have seven meetings a year, including our AGM, and we have been fortunate in obtaining sponsorship from local businesses to cover the cost of these lectures.

Having now successfully become a community, where most tenants know, interact and help each other, we have developed a very active pool of willing helpers who will undertake tasks which benefits the site as a whole. We also arranged some dry-stone walling courses, one of which has already been successfully completed, and we are hoping these will assist us in repairing the perimeter wall round the site.

We try to be as self-supporting as possible and our income comes from various sources i.e., membership fees, monthly draw, raffles and sales of tea and cake at our meetings, social events, sale of materials and supplies, together with donations from the public in general. We have now opened our membership by inviting non-tenants to become Associate Members, which will entitle them to attend the lectures and take advantage of any special deals we may have on offer.

We are always on the lookout for small funding opportunities to enable us to continue with the regeneration of the allotments. Being situated where we are we are very conscious about making the site pleasant for walkers, and to be as aesthetically pleasing as possible, thus maintaining the ethos of the area. Many passers-by have expressed their pleasure at seeing the allotments develop in the way they have. The site was also a large part of Shipley's 'Yorkshire in Bloom' entry, and to our delight, as a first time entry, we emerged with a 'Silver' award. We have also put ourselves forward to be part of the 2009 entry in the same competition.

Besides continuing with improving the allotments site, our plans for the future are, if possible, to develop the clubhouse into a small information centre where pupils on field trips could drop in to look at posters and the library, and possibly look round the wild-life centre. We would also like to integrate with other organisations such as 'Friends of Northcliffe' allowing them to use our facilities. This is a future undertaking but something we are working towards. We also need to have a new water system installed, drainage installed, and it would be great to have a toilet block too. Pie in the sky? Perhaps, but who knows? It's surprising what can be achieved if one sets one's mind to it!

Today almost every tenant is a member of the Society and we have developed into a well-integrated multi-racial community with tenants ranging from African, Middle Eastern, Latvian and Italian, to Indian, Pakistani and Greek as well as British. With the help and support of all the tenants we continue to go from strength to strength.

<b>Chairperson:</b> Ann Davis  <b>Tel:</b> 01274 584371 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:gerrycooper_98@hotmail.com">gerrycooper_98@hotmail.com</a>	<b>Treasurer:</b> Philip Ruffe  <b>Tel:</b> 01274 594816 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:pat@martinruffe.co.uk">pat@martinruffe.co.uk</a>	<b>Secretary:</b> I Vidler  <b>Tel:</b> 01274 592518 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:irenevidler@live.co.uk">irenevidler@live.co.uk</a>	<b>Speakers' Secretary:</b> Ann Ashe  <b>Tel:</b> 01274 580455 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:annashe40@tiscali.co.uk">annashe40@tiscali.co.uk</a>
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## Thank you Veronica Youngson for the fungi walks

It is with regret that Veronica Youngson will no longer be leading our fungi walks. For a number of years Veronica has led walks at different times of the year covering: wild flowers, trees and by no means least fungi. Veronica's walks have inspired me. When I walk the dog I see the whole of Northcliffe in a different way from how I used to view it. It makes the walks so much more interesting.

Starting with spring I am looking out for (along with other plants) the Wood Anemones that tell us that Northcliffe is ancient woodland for example.

On summer walks Veronica shows us the Dawn Redwood tree near the miniature railway. Until the 1940's it was known only from fossil remains, as it had been thought extinct for many millions of years. Then, in a village in China, some living examples were located. Seeds were soon spread across the globe, and now, although relatively rare, they can be found in many parts of the world, including Britain.

Last but not least the fungi walk, mainly in the autumn. I had never realised how many different fungi there are and how interesting they are. The Birch Polypore (*Piptoporus betulinus*) for instance is also known as the Razor strop because if it is dried it can be used to sharpen knives. There is a small selection of fungi pictures on the Northcliffe web-site, which shows how diverse they are. Northcliffe is a good place to see many different species.

Thank you so much Veronica for all your interesting walks.



### Wanted Leader for fungi walks

We now have a need to find a person to lead our fungi walks in the autumn. If you are that person or know of someone who would lead a walk please contact Sheila Parkin our Secretary on 01274 594518 or send an email to Friends of Northcliffe at [friendsofnorthcliffe@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:friendsofnorthcliffe@blueyonder.co.uk)

## Northcliffe Nature Notes and Lynton Garden Ramblings!

Spring has definitely sprung!! Blue tits and great tits are prospecting for nest boxes in our garden and I've seen lots of nest materials being gathered by other birds too, providing Hugh with yet another excuse for not tidying the garden!!!!

On Sunday, two long-tailed tits were hopping on Hugh's car looking for cobwebs, to build their tiny, intricate nest with, providing Hugh with a good excuse for not cleaning the car!!! The ponds and water buckets are full of frogspawn. The frogs lulled me to sleep, at night; especially in the rain, when they seem to love to 'sing', or should that be 'a wooing go'!!! Bumblebees have been bumbling amongst early flowering plants, this last week; a good reason to grow these. Saw the first butterfly in the Garden on Saturday.

I got sun burnt sitting in the garden on Wednesday!!! The starlings were enjoying the sun too; sitting in our large tree, their feathers iridescent and multi-coloured in the sunlight. We have a little hedgehog visitor, who has just woken up, this last week, and is very hungry. He comes to our front door looking for his spring 'breakfast'!! He likes cat food and is very cute. The fox is a regular visitor too. He prefers his snack to be left on the patio. He is especially fond of fish and chips!! Providing me with a good excuse to eat these!! ..leaving the lion's share for the fox...of course!!!

Earlier in March, I heard magpies chattering away. I looked up into the huge ash tree at the end of Lynton Drive, expecting to see 3-4 birds. My jaw dropped as I saw there were over 30!!! They were having a real get together!!!! No doubt discussing what a soft touch the people are, at no. 23!! I think they all wanted to be in the Northcliffe newsletter!!

Just a few days ago, dozens of tiny, newborn lambs arrived in the field above the golf course off High Bank lane. They are so gorgeous gambling around. The crocuses below the golf club have looked stunning this year. Well done to those who helped to plant them. They really cheer me up on my way to work. Also in this area (slightly outside Northcliffe ..I know..but definitely worth a mention)..are the delightful donkeys at the end of High Bank Lane! They're sooooooo cute and endearing with their appealing eyes!! They love to eat carrots/ apples and veg peelings. I whole heartedly recommend visiting them if you need cheering up!!! They'd love to see you, especially if you have carrots!!! With all these distractions it's no wonder I'm always late for work!!!

Earlier in the year whilst entering Spring Wood from Lynton Drive, I discovered a large flock of thrushes. There were around 50 fieldfares and some redwings. Less numerous but equally as exciting, we have seen siskins in the garden again this year. This is the first time in several years. We were really pleased. They like the thistle feeders that we put out for the goldfinches. Earlier in the year we saw a single male and then last week I saw a single female on the same feeder. I hope they find one another!!!!

We have seen much more of our long-tailed tits this year. We have a flock of around a dozen that visit us, twittering away. They are very tame. I was gardening over the winter and they still came up to the feeders within inches of where I was standing!! They are such beautiful, tiny things. I'm pretty sure two are building a nest in the garden. A few years ago two built a nest in a berberis bush, in the garden. An excellent choice, as these are very prickly and would keep the predators away.

We often hear a green woodpecker calling from Spring Woods at the end of Lynton Drive. There is a new woodpecker hole, high up in the large ash tree there. I wonder if it is his? We will have to keep watching this. We may see cute babies peeking out of the hole!! I will be sure to let you know.

On our evening walks over winter we heard a lot of geese passing over. I have seen a lot more geese this year too; sometimes hundreds flying over in long straggling skeins; reminiscent of our holidays in Norfolk. We also often saw foxes on these walks in the woods. One evening I saw two deer. We stared at one another for a while before they finally decided to run off! What a wonderful experience, and so close to home. The foxes were very vociferous again over the winter nights. I often heard several barking around midnight. One night I heard 4 separate calls. They are clearly doing well in the area. Possibly all those fish and chips!!!

To bring us back to spring though...

On a recent visit to Drop Farm tearooms, on the moors near Oxenhope, I heard curlews, lapwings and golden plovers calling. Their calls so evocative of warm summer evenings. AAAAAAHHHHHHHHH. What a wonderful thought!! And what a wonderful world we are blessed with ..and so much so close to home...

Whilst I am writing this the most delightful song thrush is singing his heart out; his incantation to his maker, on a glorious spring day. So **save carbon**...you don't need to jump in the car or on a plane there is so much to see here. We are so blessed. Hope you can get out and enjoy it too. I'm so grateful when I can and it does wonders for my spirits!!

To finish; a very simple little 'poem' I wrote, whilst sat in the garden the other day!!!

### Easter Ditty!!

Spring has arrived.

Praise the LORD!!

Birds singing

Bees bumbling

Buds bursting

Flowers dancing

Lambs gambling

Daffodils bobbing in the breeze

Warm sunshine washing away the winter blues!!

Hallelujah!

We have so much to thank God for!!!! Not least the reason we celebrate Easter!!! Spring really lifts my spirit...but how much more so, the Message of Easter!!!!

God bless. Lisa.xxx

20<sup>th</sup> March.

## **Hot off the Press!!**

Whilst I sat in the garden on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> of March, I heard a chiffchaff, for the first time this year. He had obviously wanted to make this newsletter!!! He has flown all this way to join us, so I couldn't leave him out!! We often hear them in Spring Wood. This is a good sign that spring has definitely arrived. I need to add, 'chiffchaffs calling' to my little ditty!

Come and join us on the dawn chorus walk on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> of May and hear them, along with all the other wonderful songbirds in our woods.



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On checking how well the Wood Sorrel was growing, which we planted with the Brownies, I was inspired to write the poem below.

Marlene Young.

### **Returning Home to Northcliffe**

*by M. Young*

Their dainty heads looked perky,  
and proudly did display  
their bright green petals openly  
as they came out to play.  
It seemed as they were nestling,  
Contented in the loam,  
The pretty little wood sorrel  
Were glad to be back home



## Current COMMITTEE MEMBERS until AGM

Jenny Burnell, Committee, 64 Norwood Avenue.	Tel. 587339
June Carter, Committee, 12 Aireville Grange.	Tel. 590172
Jenny Cassidy, Chair, 20 Moorhead Crescent.	Tel. 580068
Joan Newman, Committee, 42 Moorhead Crescent.	Tel. 583004
Sheila Parkin, Secretary & Deputy Chair, 10 Springswood Avenue.	Tel. 594518
Margot Rowan, Committee, 30 Lynton Drive	Tel. 580705
Keith Scott, Newsletter Editor, 104 Avondale Road.	Tel. 585694
Joan Stevens, Committee, 14 Marlborough Road.	Tel. 581868
Margaret Walker, Treasurer, 66 Avondale Road.	
Colin Wood, Conservation Officer, 6 High Bank Lane.	Tel. 581179
Tracy Wood, Committee, 6 High Bank Lane.	Tel. 581179
Marlene Young, Committee, 57 Norwood Terrace.	Tel. 583067

If you are not a member of Friends of Northcliffe, but are interested in joining, please complete the portion below and send it with a cheque - made payable to Friends of Northcliffe - to the Treasurer

Margaret Walker until AGM, and then Joan Stevens, addresses above.

### Friends of Northcliffe membership form.

*Please tick the appropriate boxes*

Individuals £3   . Family £5   . Concessions £2   .      New   . Renew   .

**Name(s):**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

Cheque enclosed for £

### Members Subscriptions

The subscription year for Friends of Northcliffe runs from April to April.

You can use the above form to renew your membership.