

FRIENDS OF NORTHCLIFFE



The 'flavour' of this newsletter is very satisfying. It includes news, memories, history, nature, humanity, literature, brain teasing, dog tales ... the stuff of life. If you have photos, poems or writing about Northcliffe, - in its many guises - and you would like to contribute to the newsletter, we would particularly welcome items with a 'Summer in Northcliffe' theme.

John Bromley

Northcliffe News

March 2012

Chair's Chat

Welcome: A warm welcome to new members John & Diana Atkinson, Maggie Eisner, Michael Garnett, Simon & Angela Hudson, and Clive, Lou & Florence Nutton. We are grateful for your support.

Membership subscriptions: Annual subscriptions are due on 1st April. If you have already renewed, thank you for your continued support. If you have yet to do so, you should have received a renewal notice by email or with this newsletter.

Northcliffe Woods Woodland Management Plan: We are committed to conserving and enhancing Northcliffe and Old Spring Woods and fully support the production and implementation of management plans. (See Page 3)

Funding News: We are grateful to have been offered a grant of £100 from St Paul's church. We have also secured funding from Bradford Council to be spent on a bird feeding area; more details in the next newsletter. We are grateful to Councillor Martin Love for his assistance.

Antisocial behaviour: Over recent months there have been several reports of people using chainsaws in the woods and also the use of off road vehicles. It is important that such incidents are reported promptly to the Park Rangers on 01274 432696.

Margaret Walker: Margaret, who was Treasurer of the Friends for many years, recently suffered a stroke. 'Margaret, we wish you well in your recovery'.
Hugh Firman, Chair

NEWSFLASH!

Friends of Northcliffe has been awarded a grant of £43150 to fund the new children's play area in Northcliffe. Well done particularly to Steve for his hard work on the bid.

Events

We are pleased to present our diary of Events in the separate insert. You can also help ...



Jam jar appeal - We urgently need empty jam jars, (clean, no lids) to help us raise funds at our events. Please contact me to arrange collection or deliver to 49 Clifton Place, Shipley. Leave them on my doorstep if not home. Thank you for making it possible to create sweet jars for tombola.

Stewards required

We need volunteers to steward our Easter egg hunt and collect donations on Sat 7th April. We are also looking for volunteers for the Rae Gala. To help us on the day of our events for an hour please contact me via email melbruzzese@yahoo.co.uk or call 01274 530142. Thank you.



First Aiders - If you have a first Aid certificate and attend our events please let us know



All events and guided walks require a sufficient number of First Aiders and we are always looking for volunteers. Contact me prior to the event you are attending.

Thank you. Melanie Bruzzese

Northcliffe Wood Management Plan

Having presented the management plan in its Forestry Commission format at the January meeting of the Friends, the following may put a little more flesh on the rather bare bones of that document. It is intended that through regular meetings, the Trees and Woodlands Department and the Friends of Northcliffe will work to produce a wood that is a safe, interesting place to visit, that has good biodiversity and contributes to the overall quality of life for the local community.

Ideally the wood should be native broadleaf woodland, that is, without the current beech and sycamore. Given the current financial constraints, major silvicultural operations such as the removal of mature trees are not envisaged, however the work of the Friends in removing the masses of seedlings produced by the beech has halted the spread of the species and produced open space where the native oak may regenerate. If circumstances allow in the future selective felling of non-natives may be carried out. The glades or open spaces thus created will be suitable for oak and birch regeneration, or possible planting sites. Light levels within the wood will be maintained at their current state to retain a suitable environment for the bluebells.

Following discussion at the recent Friends' meeting, in the near future a hedge of native trees and woodland shrubs will be planted at the top of the wood adjacent to the golf club; and some thinning and lifting of the crowns of the sycamore trees adjacent to the model engineering track will be carried out to improve light levels. Routine tasks of litter picking, path clearance and renovation will be carried out as resources are available. We are fortunate in Bradford to have so much public woodland, it does however mean that our staff are spread quite thinly! The removal of balsam, a task where the efforts of the Friends has had a considerable effect, will need to be continued, since the ability of this stuff to colonize is legendary.

We will carry out as quickly as possible any arboricultural or silvicultural work that is generated by the need to make trees safe, whether caused by storm damage or detected by surveys. All work carried out in the wood will be to U.K. Woodland Assurance Scheme standards, and it is intended that Northcliffe in addition to the rest of Bradford district woodland will be managed to a standard that will qualify for UKWAS registration in future.

Colin Whitfield (Assistant Manager, BMDC)



Conservation News

The conservation activity during the winter reflects the aims that are outlined in Colin's article (*above*) about the management plan for Northcliffe Woods. Essentially we have continued with the programme of beech thinning to allow light through to the woodland floor, encouraging regeneration of oak, rowan, birch and bluebells. In January record numbers of volunteers enabled good progress to be made in thinning beech saplings in a very visible area near the Moorhead entrance to the woods. This led to a decision to plant a short section of hedge, made up of native species that will provide food and shelter to wildlife. Species will include blackthorn, hawthorn, holly, guelder rose, wild cherry, crab apple and hazel. In addition, rowan, field maple and hazel have been planted as an understory amongst the trees. Volunteers made a start with the planting at the Conservation activity on March 3rd (*see photos*). The remainder of the trees will be planted by participants on a Forest Schools training day in mid March. ~

The next task is to plan the summer's balsam-pulling to continue with the excellent progress made last year. Group sessions are planned for Weds., June 13th and Thurs., June 28th both starting at 7pm. Meet at the model railway, off Cliffe Wood Avenue. If anyone wishes to adopt an area of balsam, or to work in addition to the scheduled Friends' sessions then please get in touch so we can co-ordinate the effort.

(~ Forest Schools and their link to Northcliffe will be covered in a future newsletter)

Julia Pearson

Community News

Northcliffe Environmental Enterprises Team (NEET)

If you go up the path past the allotments from the Cliffe Wood Avenue entrance, on the top allotment site you'll come across NEET. This great community project supports adults with learning disabilities, and I talked to Ian Sutcliffe about what they're up to this year. They're already selling seed potatoes, onions and veg, and the range extends as the season progresses. If you're a keen gardener or allotmenteer, why not support a local initiative and buy from them? They have recently completed work on a bird hide, and work is in progress to open a coffee bar in May. You'll also see NEET volunteers selling plants in the bottom car park next to the main entrance on Bradford Road from early May onwards. NEET is open 9-4 Monday-Friday and 9-12 on Saturday.

Other Community News

Melanie and I attended a meeting of the **Friends of Parks** at City Hall in December. It was good to see so many other groups represented there, and to hear about their plans. We also had the opportunity to feed back what we'd like from the Council. It's good to see the partnership working well already for Friends of Northcliffe. Gillian Biggs and Suzy Feltham have been very supportive in our bid for funding for the new children's playground. Malcolm Wright, the Area Parks Manager, will be doing a walk-round with us later in March to help develop an action plan for funding and activities.

Many thanks to **Bradford Model Engineering Society**, (see the article on Page 7), for installing a powerpoint that will help supply electricity for the **Rae Gala**. We're really grateful to them for their ongoing support for all the events we carry out in the woods. Our friends at the **Shipleigh Bowling Club** and **Northcliffe Golf Club** are helping out too; - the bowling club hosting our planning meetings, and the golf club offering a venue for a nice drink after the **Bluebell Walk in May**. (See our *Events flier*). There really is a greater sense of community developing around Northcliffe. If there's anyone else you think we should be speaking to, ask them to contact me on 01274 530142 or stevebruzzese@yahoo.co.uk.

Steve Bruzzese

Northcliffe Nature Notes and Lynton Garden Ramblings

March 1st - Hallelujah! Spring has sprung! I love to go for a little walk first thing to Old Spring Woods at the end of Lynton Drive with my morning cuppa tea. This morning the birdsong was amazing; a tiny wren was singing his little heart out, accompanied by our ever-present robin's beautiful song. The rich, deep, liquid tones of a melodic mistle thrush were providing the baritone! Long-tailed tits were nesting in a neighbour's holly, chitter-chattering away as they did so. A pair of nuthatches were investigating holes and crevices in the mature trees and a much larger wood pigeon was investigating much larger holes for his nest too. A treecreeper was living up to his name, searching for grubs in the tree bark; all this just on the woodland edge before I even left the street.

Earlier in the year just inside Old Spring Woods I was privileged to be bombarded by woodpeckers - 2 or 3 males and a female were clearly disputing territory. There was lots of loud drumming and chasing one another off; whistling past my head. Wow, what an experience!

There was also a large flock of fieldfares and redwings in Old Spring Woods in the winter, which was lovely to see. We had some gloriously frosty days earlier in the year. I love to put on my wellies and get straight out into the woods and up the hill. The views are just glorious from up there; across to Ilkley Moor or west towards St Ives and the Haworth Moors. I hope you didn't miss the glorious sunsets over the winter. On one particularly frosty day with a bright, blue sky and crunchy ground underfoot, I was mesmerised by a stunningly beautiful jay, his colours radiant in the bright sunshine against the sea blue sky, his crest raised - a glorious sight.

It's officially Spring! The sheep are back on the moor at Ilkley. The curlews, oystercatchers and lapwings are back in the Dales; their calls so evocative of the hills in summer. There are tiny new born lambs in the fields at Bolton Abbey.

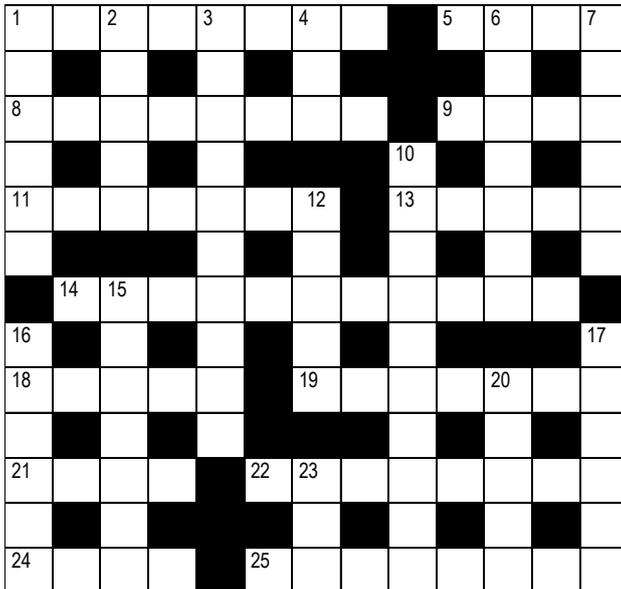
Wildlife Gardening tips: Remember not to tidy your gardens too much before the Spring - I recently discovered dozens of ladybirds hibernating whilst tidying our garden. Don't forget to feed the birds. This week we were honoured to have a pair of Siskins on our seed feeders.

Lisa Chadwick Firman

Northcliffe Crossword No 1

The answers can be found on the bottom of page
7

Composed by Joan Newman & Douglas Lumb



Clues Across

- 1 Furry climber [8]
- 5 Not new [4]
- 8 Root bound plant. What needs to be done? [2-6]
- 9 Tall ____ from little acorns grow. David Everett 1770-1813 [4]
- 11 We talk about the of spring [7]
- 13 Shy water mammal - not found in Northcliffe [5]
- 14 BEN THE STRAY - Better to be free-range [7,4]
- 18 We all need this [5]
- 19 A girl's name, related to Erica [7]
- 21 Ducks would like this [4]
- 22 The signposts in Northcliffe "..... walk" [8]
- 24 Work to be done [4]
- 25 Colour before something that gives a ringing sound [8]

Clues Down

- 1 Runs through the woods [6]
- 2 Not the lower path [5]
- 3 VAST TO ROAR - Could be useful in the allotments [10]
- 4 When the bats fly out [3]
- 6 RAN PAST - A hardy man from ancient Greece [7]
- 7 None of 18 across available here [6]
- 10 HOLDS SPADE - For a high class horse [4,6]
- 12 Deciduous conifer not found in Northcliffe [5]
- 15 A member a meeting [7]
- 16 My animal friend [3,3]
- 17 RIBALD - Related to a wedding [6]
- 20 Haul something heavy [5]
- 23 Flies silently [3]

Dog Days in Northcliffe

One may meet people for years in Northcliffe and never know their names, but they can be identified because of their dogs. "I saw Max the other day"... "Have you seen Henry recently?"... refer to the dogs not the owners. "I was talking to a chap in the woods",..."Who?"..."Don't know his name, but he's got a small brown dog". "Oh, I know who you mean".

Many owners stick to certain times to walk their dogs, some because of work commitments, others just like the certainty of routine, and dogs know very well if a walk is overdue and can put a deal of pressure on a tardy owner. If the walk is at a different time then a whole new set of dogs is met and these have to be investigated. Maybe growled at, often ignored or sometimes played with. There have been occasional very serious fights with horrendous and costly consequences, but on the whole that area is large enough to accommodate all types and characters; some to be avoided and others greeted happily. The same can be applied to the owners.

All human life is here, all canine life too. A Pomeranian who thinks he's a wolf, a wolfhound that runs away from anything on 4 legs. A beautiful failed Police dog, damaged in training, who needs care and understanding; an Almost Great Dane, large and dark and totally gentle; then what one considers a reliable Border collie strikes at any dog that it dislikes. A gentle English setter used for breeding and kept in a kennel now re-homed and glorying in the freedom of the woods; a product of a puppy farm, unsocialised and now wary of anything unfamiliar. A merry mongrel adopted and happy after being abandoned in the ASDA car park; a spaniel reunited with its owner after being dog-napped; and a pleasant Staffie who spends his time happily rolling small rocks round the woods.

There are dogs that set off and go, leaving owners shouting forlornly until their pets decide to reappear, and dogs who respond immediately to any command. There are dogs who want to be friends with everybody and insist on leaping up in greeting and leaving muddy marks on garments as a sign of affection; and dogs that can smell treats in a pocket many yards away and attach themselves as if by glue to the pocket's

owner. Any dog fortunate enough to meet some kind person feeding the birds will display a gourmet's delight at the luscious stale crusts being scattered, yet look with disdain should the equivalent fare be put in its bowl for tea.

Pedigrees and mutts, expensively-purchased breeds and rescue dogs, large, small, fat or rangy, they are all basically the same in their ways and needs. We remember old faithful who are suddenly not there anymore, some grieving owners never reappear but others come back to share the woods with a new dog. Occasionally an owner dies, and their dog gradually begins to enjoy life with another family. Sadly some dogs are runners and need to be kept on the lead or they'd never be seen again, and others develop a taste for jogger's ankles or may be aggressive towards their own kind so they appear wearing smart muzzles, yet they are quite friendly and docile at home.

Ann Dalton

My "Expotitions to the North Pole"

As a child in the 1940s our expeditions to Northcliffe were just as exciting as A. A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh and his "expotitions".

The stiff climb up Moorhead Lane led us to the play area (no longer there) just below the Golf Club. The two sets of swings gave scope for lots of childish acrobatics, which were no doubt dangerous. The swings were tied up on Sundays, but we could still use the roundabout, though I learnt that they made me sick. Then there was the slide, where we let our dog follow us up the steps and then slide down - I don't think she enjoyed it as much as we did. She loved chasing us as we slid down the grassy slope, especially when it was covered in snow.

At the bottom we paddled in the stream which followed the course of what is now Avondale Road and collected frogspawn in the pond which was in the area near Moorhead Lane. We roamed the woods to find wild flowers and even ventured right through the woods to Six Days Only to purchase nettle beer.

Life was much simpler then and pleasures more home-made, especially during the war, when a "Holidays at Home" programme was arranged on the grassy slopes near the Branch Hotel, to entertain Shipley residents.

In those days children were safe to go off and amuse themselves more or less whenever they chose - and Northcliffe was where we chose to go.

Ev Wilkinson



Shipleys best kept secret*

Northcliff miniature railway.

Ken Shipley



It may come as a surprise to many people but the miniature railway in Northcliff** Woods is now entering its 44th year of service. Run by Bradford Model Engineering Society the track was previously situated in Rycroft Fields at Thackley from 1946 to 1966, during 1966 notice was given to vacate the site prior to sale so the search was on for a new venue. Bradford Council was approached about a possible location but after 13 weeks and no response the committee were advised to try Shipley UDC, long before it all merged into Bradford Metro. Very quickly various sites in the Wood were offered and at the BMES committee meeting on 12th October 1966 the decision was taken to move to Northcliff, building started and the raised track was on Graham with his freelance 5" gauge Atlantic 4-4-2 loco "Pamela"; meanwhile work was in hand to convert the old Bandstand into a clubhouse. Later in 1969 a boating lake in the centre of the track was proposed and to help fund it a 60 mile nonstop run took place. Sponsorship of the loco, again "Pamela", was obtained and the team of 4 drivers completed 720 laps of the 1/12th of a mile circuit in 8 hrs 26 mins, coaling, water filling and driver changes all took place on the move; alas, the pond never got built and has been the subject of a number of subsequent attempts, all failing mainly due to financial constraints. The raised track is 440 ft long and can accommodate 3 1/2" and 5" gauge locos.

In 1990 plans were passed to build a ground level track 2000ft long to accommodate 5" and 7 1/4" gauge locos plus an extension to the clubhouse to form a workshop/storage area. This was opened on 17th June 1992 by Councillor Bob Sowman, Deputy Lord Mayor of Bradford who enjoyed a chance to drive a steam loco. In 1993 BMES ran trains in conjunction with the Bradford Festival. A first for BMES in 2010 was to run trains for Melanie & Steve's "Wedding in the Woods", an event which attracted a lot of publicity.

Over the years BMES has worked closely with Friends of Northcliffe in putting on events to the mutual benefit of both organisations, these include in 1995 the 75th Anniversary of Northcliff being donated to Shipley by Sir Norman Rae and this year looks busier than ever with trains running at The Easter Egg event, The Big Jubilee Lunch, The Rae Gala and The Northcliff Olympics. BMES has also run events for charity, these include RNLI, Marie Curie Cancer Hospice, Bradford Heart Support Group and this year Candlelighters childrens charity.

The railway is officially open on Sundays, 1.30 - 4.30pm. from Easter to the end of October but may be running over the winter, weather permitting. Birthday parties for children are also a feature on selected Saturdays during the open season, please contact the secretary on the website below for more details.

The Society also includes boating members who sail at Bradford Moor Park lake on Sunday mornings, again, weather permitting, and members interested in road vehicles, clock making and general engineering subjects. BMES was founded in 1908 and is the 4th oldest model engineering society in Britain and the 8th oldest in the world. We welcome enquiries from new members, a membership form can be downloaded from the website:-

www.bradfordmes.co.uk ken.shipley@virgin.net

*It's amazing how many people walking up the woods come up to us and say "I've lived in Shipley for 30 years and never knew about this"; hence 'the secret'.

** Northcliff – the original spelling

Crossword Answers

Across: 1 Squirrel, 5 Used, 8 Re-potted, 9 Oaks, 11 Arrival, 13 Otter, 14 Battery hens, 18 Water, 19 Heather, 21 Pond, 22 Woodland, 24 Task, 25 Bluebell.

Down: 1 Stream, 2 Upper, 3 Rotavators, 4 Eve, 6 Spartan, 7 Desert, 10 Posh saddle, 12 Larch, 15 Attends, 16 Own pet, 17 Bridal, 20 Heave, 23 Owl.





Northcliffe History Walk

On a cold but pleasant February Sunday, a group of some 30 local people were led by *Tony Woods* on a history walk, taking in Northcliffe Woods, 6 Days Only (Heaton Royds) and the site of Fyfe's brickworks in Royds Wood. Tony is researching coal mining and fire clay extraction in the area with *Derek Barker*. While coal mining had been taking place for centuries on a small scale, it was in the second half of the nineteenth century that fire clay extraction developed.

Heaton Woods and Northcliffe became local centres for both extraction of the clay and the manufacturing of firebricks, chimneys and sanitary pipes (drain pipes). Walkers were shown the 'bell' pits of older works and the likely locations of pits and buildings used by the companies exploiting the natural resources of the area. Many of these features are indistinct nowadays but can be verified from historical maps and other records.

The walk stopped briefly at Heaton Royds, where we looked at the site of long demolished cottages. At the opposite end of Heaton Royds Lane, we looked over the fence of the former Heaton Royds School, which was once the site of John Rhodes Fyfe's Shipley Firebrick Works. The two brick houses behind us were built for workers at the plant. Tony explained that a George Heaton had earlier mined coal and fireclay in Heaton Woods and then on the school site. Fyfe took over the works in the 1870s and dramatically extended them. We looked at a plan of the works from that period and at a photograph showing large buildings, kilns and stacks of sanitary tubes.

Tony and Derek are preparing a paper on their research. This walk gave just a 'taster', exciting the interest of a number of Friends of Northcliffe members. On behalf of all the walk participants a big Thank you!

“A Penny for Going”

The history and regeneration of Saltaire told through its shops (*Limited edition*)

by Roger Clarke - £8.50

From hand-me-down clothing, darned socks and patched trousers to haute couture. From cobbled shoes and nit combs to fashion and beauty. From pie and peas to international cuisine.

Here's a new look at a familiar story for those who know Saltaire, and a good introduction for visitors who don't.

Roger Clarke uses the history of shops and retailing to chart the change from Victorian mill village to a modern regenerating community. Detailed appendices describe the history of all forty shops within the village, and many more besides. Based on fascinating new research, this is the story of Saltaire told from a fresh perspective. It describes the history of the village through its shops and shopkeepers – key barometers of change. Originally, Saltaire provided all the essentials of living for its residents, but these same shops now house businesses which cater for visitors with more modern tastes. Set in Titus Salt's beautiful architecture, the narrative takes the reader back into the past, but with a unique modern twist.

Available from Saltaire Visitor Information Centre website and other local outlets.

All proceeds from the sale of the book donated to the restoration fund for Saltaire United Reformed Church.

