

# Friends of Farnham Park

Newsletter October 2009



A Bunch of Daffodil fans

Registered Charity No. 285383

## NOTICE OF AGM

The FoFP Annual General Meeting will be held at  
The Rowhills Centre, Cranmore Lane,  
on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009** at about 8.30pm,  
AFTER the



## HARRY PEPPER ILLUSTRATED DEER TALK

*Tea & biscuits from 6.45pm for 7pm start.*

Following his captivating Squirrel Talk last year we had to get Harry back, so do come along and enjoy his illustrated Deer Talk, 7 to 8pm-ish, with a questions session and refreshments. Harry will be followed at 8.30pm by the Rangers' Report and the highlight, our Annual General Meeting.

### DAFFODIL PLANTING

The last Sunday morning in September saw the fruition of an idea long-pursued by Tim Seely, when a ten-strong team of Friends were engaged in the planting of native varieties of wild daffodil bulbs along both sides of the Avenue ("Bunch & Judy", above). The team was ably led and directed by Robin Crowther, who also supplied welcome mid-morning refreshments to the weary workers. Interspersed between the tree-lines, approximately 1000 bulbs were planted, along almost the whole length of the Avenue. Spring 2010 will see the culmination of these plantings, when hopefully a whole host of golden daffodils will burst forth to delight the gaze of the Park's visitors. - Martin Clegg

We should congratulate Waverley on their recruitment process turning up trumps, with new ranger Robin Crowther settling in and proving to be both a real asset and a great bloke. A warm welcome too to Alan Gale, Robin's assistant now living at the lodge, who you'll no doubt meet around the Park.

An eventful season saw the return of the **Friends' Social Barbecue** (pictured), which though carefully planned for the wettest week of the summer was a resounding success, with around 50 of us feasting in good company with no reported fatalities. Thanks to everyone that attended, we hope to do it even better next year (i.e. more spice cake & wine - *discuss*).

Apart from splashing out on the lavish £3-a-head festivities we've been trying hard to spend some of our accumulated balance, as requested at the last AGM, by buying a gazebo, half the daffodil bulbs, and some lady-sized gardening tools for the (similarly-sized) conservation volunteers, as modelled by Helen above.

Another Park User Survey has been conducted, confirming that more people visit when it is dry than when it is wet, but worryingly it appears to also show that on some days far more people enter the Park than leave it. As none of our Members have been reported missing, it is not of concern to FoFP.

Look out for the new Notice Boards and genuine Indestructible Rustic Plastic bins on your walks. Have you seen the 'new' Park Lodge? The new ponds are 'to follow', watch this space. -Jerry



## RANGER'S REPORT OCTOBER 09

We're set to break a thousand volunteer hours in the Park this year - a big thanks to you all. Our friendly group meets every Wednesday morning and also the last Sunday of the month and are involved in a wide range of countryside management activities. They all enjoy the fresh air, exercise, a bit of a chat plus tea and a wide variety of biscuits at 11am. Why not try your hand at the ancient rural skills of coppicing or hedge-laying, or maybe slip on a pair of wellies and get stuck into some of our ponds? There is something for everyone this winter in the Park. Come and see for yourself - dates and locations are advertised on our new entrance boards all round the Park. - Robin Crowther

### CONTACTS: THE FoFP COMMITTEE

Chairman: Jerry Hyman	724664
<a href="mailto:jerryhyman@tiscali.co.uk">jerryhyman@tiscali.co.uk</a>	
Secretary: Martin Clegg	821977
<a href="mailto:martin_clegg@btinternet.com">martin_clegg@btinternet.com</a>	
Treasurer: David Havenhand	404983
<a href="mailto:d.havenhand1@ntlworld.com">d.havenhand1@ntlworld.com</a>	
Judy Sauter (Membership)	668813
Nick Street (Publicity)	725094
Plus Helen Wilson (Events), Tim Seely, Dr. Rosemary Thomas.	



*Painted Lady*

Waverley's consultation on the **Farnham Park Miniplan** received hundreds of Responses representing some 3000 members of local organisations, almost entirely opposed to the proposals. There's far too much going on to detail here, but the good news is that the owner of the Farnham Park Hotel has provided what seems an ideal solution by kindly putting forward his 'land to the east', which has the advantage of being a genuine new 'SANG'. An independent consultant hired by the council to assess the options concluded that the Hotel land is "essential" to any strategy, and the Council decision date has since been rescheduled from October to December. For more information contact Martin or Jerry.

### PARK BUTTERFLY SURVEY 2009

Having just looked at my 2008 report and read that I had hoped 2009 would see an increase in numbers over 2008 - I am pleased to report that it was so - 559 recordings against 439 last year! Still nothing like the numbers being reported in the earlier years of this century, but a move in the right direction nevertheless.

The transect is still the same - from the bottom of Hampton Road, diagonally across the Park to end at St. James' Avenue, for 26 weeks from the beginning of April to the end of September. On the face of it, the weather appears to have been ideal for butterflies - on 20 of the 26 walks the temperature was 17 C (63 F) or above and sunny days (50% or more blue sky) totalled 24. As last year, the wind was a factor, with a recorded speed of 3 (leaves and twigs in motion) or over, on 15 occasions.

As is to be expected, the most prolific months for sightings were June (160), July (134 - much lower than last year!) and August (176). The only low month was September, with only 18 sightings. On only one occasion did I draw a blank - the 3rd week in May, whilst the most recorded in a week was 101 in the last week in June.

Yet again, the Meadow Brown at 181 sightings in 14 weeks was the most prolific butterfly. What was very noticeable this year was a marked increase in "whites" from 55 last to 123 this year. The Speckled Wood was the butterfly most frequently encountered - 78 insects in 23 of the 26 weeks. Although the Marbled White (17 against 18) and Skippers (12 against 13) maintained their numbers, and the Orange Tip increased (17 against 5), the Gatekeeper at only 14, was considerably down on last year's 39, as was the Ringlet (45 against 66). The "aristocrats" of the butterfly world - Red Admiral, Peacock, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell and Blues - were few and far between - 20 in total (about the same as last year), but I was pleased to record a Clouded Yellow in August. I guess the highlight of the year was the influx of Painted Ladies in May. In total, I recorded 32 of them, perhaps disappointing since there were so many in gardens - in fact at 2 pm on 9th August, there were 7 Painted Ladies, 3 Peacocks a Red Admiral, a Comma and a Brimstone, plus numerous whites on a single buddleia in my garden, which backs onto the Park. I started my walk 15 minute later and recorded just 1 Painted Lady, and apart from whites, none of the others, proof that the transect is a snapshot of the Park, not a definitive measure of the total number of butterflies present!

The most productive section of the transect again was the stretch behind The Ranger's House as far as White Bottom where 186 sightings were made - at least one each week. White Bottom again was the least productive with only 28 in 11 weeks. It was noticeable that the Southern Slopes, leading to St. James' Avenue was far more productive than in previous years, and that the majority of the whites were seen there. They probably escaped from the vegetable gardens along High Park Road and Stoke Hills!

With such a dry summer this year, hopefully 2010 will be a bumper year for butterflies. We can but hope!  
- David Havenhand

### BOOK TALK - A HISTORY OF FARNHAM PARK

Friends filled the Rowhills Centre on August 26<sup>th</sup> to hear Pat Heather introduce her beautifully written new book, 'A History of Farnham Park', which Ron Hills had encouraged her to write.

Pat began by telling us that she was a Researcher, not an author, and that with the wealth of historical information already on the 'New' Park (or 'Little Park'), she found how to start a daunting task. Eventually she chose the Bishops of Winchester as her framework, for it was each of their ownerships that shaped the Park as we know it.

Every piece of information previously written she double-checked by going to its source and if she could not verify it, it was not included. She found the Winchester Pipe Rolls immensely useful but most of the medieval documents were written in Anglo-Latin. Once she had found the code for deciphering this Anglicised dialect she had no trouble understanding them.

Perhaps her greatest challenge was the recent history because it is not well documented, and Pat had to rely on personal memories ; thus the manual digging of Friends' Pond, which is illustrated in the book, now has a permanent record. Several of the diggers were present at the meeting and much enjoyed mutual recollections. Pat's fascinating presentation was followed by a general discussion which roamed and reminisced through the distant and more recent past of our wonderful Deer Park and the surrounding areas.  
- Helen Wilson.

### EMAIL REMINDER

In order to be able to contact members more efficiently and hopefully reduce postage costs, we are updating our email lists. Some members, particularly Life and Honorary Members' details may have changed since they joined so we would appreciate it if everyone, particularly those who have not received recent emails regarding the BBQ and History talk to complete the attached form so we can amend our database. Those without email will of course still receive Newsletters etc though the post.  
- Judy Sauter