

Friends of Ponteland Park

NEWSLETTER

Committee

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ATTENTION!

A.G.M. Tuesday March 20th Merton Hall at 7.p.m.



It has been difficult choosing a representative selection of pictures to illustrate the work that has been achieved by members during the past year. An early task was snowdrop relocation, followed by siting of bird boxes, then the marathon bulb and meadow planting, Party in the Park, balsam destruction, notice boards, sponsored seats and our final effort for the year tree planting. In addition to all this visible work so much went on behind the scenes; meetings; letter writing; phone calls; emails. When I reflect upon the work achieved during our first year I am amazed. As I sit here I cannot help but wonder what 2007 has in store for F.O.P.P's.

In conclusion may I say a huge **Thank You** to all who have helped in their various ways during the past year. **Coral**

We are planning a Spring walk in the Park hopefully to enjoy the bulbs planted during last year. Please come and join us.

**Spring Walk Saturday March 17th.Meeting at10.00a.m. Somerfield entrance to Park.
Refreshments afterwards in Scout Headquarters.**

WE ARE PROGRESSING.... Both in numbers and achievement!

Membership is now 220 and climbing but the crucial point will be if YOU renew YOUR membership (see enclosure). It is still only £1 but if you wish to add a donation we should, of course, be delighted!! (email addresses would be useful if you would like to receive the newsletter on line.)

Achievement – the wonders of bulb and tree planting are reported elsewhere – we could not have done it without you! From the financial point of view the expenditure on the 10,450 bulbs we planted was covered, apart from £6.29p, by your generous donations. We were astounded (and nearly overwhelmed), so you see what a difference you make.

Sponsored Seats: At the time of writing the seats are in Ponteland with the contractor who is to install them. The sites are marked. So soon the first six kind sponsors will see the results of their donations. We thank the Parish Council for bearing the cost of their installation.

Information Boards: We needed £4,600 for boards for the six entrances to the Park. We are delighted to have been awarded £2,000 by Castle Morpeth Community Fund, £2,300 by Ponteland Parish Council, and YOU Friends of Ponteland Park have provided the final £300.! So we have all contributed The Contract is awarded and the design is under way – once again watch for developments.

Future work in the Park: We aim to be practical again on Tuesday evenings, starting during May. We meet at the Memorial Hall Car Park at 7pm. Please telephone any member of the Committee for further details – which will also be on our Notice Boards on the side of the bus shelter by Somerfields and at the Fox Covert area of the Park. Also available through www.pontelandonline.co.uk.

Spring Walk (see front of this newsletter): We look forward to seeing you when we hope we can all enjoy some of the fruits of our labours.

Thank you again for support from Ponteland Parish Council, Cowell's Garden Centre, Ponteland Print and of course yourselves. **Alma**

Young Peoples' Wood

The first stage of the 'Young Peoples' Wood' was completed early in December. On a very cold Saturday afternoon 100 British Native trees were safely planted by a large group of local young people who were just amazing. Their enthusiasm and hard work meant that the task was completed in record time—Well Done Everyone. Thanks must also go to all the adult volunteers who helped make the event go so smoothly and with such a good community feel to the whole project. Ponteland Scout Group as usual flung their wholehearted support into the day and we could not have managed without them. Seventy five per cent of the money for this stage of the project was provided by a Tree Council Grant and the rest by a donation from Ponteland Neighbourhood Watch.

The next stage of the wood will be the planting of approximately 400 under storey native shrubs, financed again by Neighbourhood Watch, and we plan to involve more local children with this during autumn and early winter 2007. Hopefully the youngsters will be involved with the continuing care of the young trees, for example clearing or trampling of competing flora, SO WATCH THIS SPACE. Sue.

Up in the Trees/Down to Earth

Recently I read in a wildlife magazine, that the quality of our lifestyle could be measured by the number of birds around our homes. If true, F.O.P.P.'s are certainly helping to maintain the standards. During January Mike and Ian removed all the nesting boxes for cleaning and general maintenance. To our surprise and delight, all five had been occupied, so it was decided to increase the number to eight. We now have five in the main area of the park and three in area on the other side of the Millennium Bridge. Can you spot them?

Some twenty years ago I purchased a bird box from a pupil who had made them in Woodwork lessons at the High school. It has been given a new roof and I decided that it will look very well near Somerfields, when present day pupils passing by could observe the handiwork of a past pupil. I wonder where that young man is now?. Do they still have woodwork lesson at school? Hint!!

Now that February has arrived and the days are getting longer, I'm sure I'm not the only F.O.P.P. member to be seen peering downwards in various areas of the park, and not because of lost keys. You may have already guessed that I am looking for all those bulbs that were planted last year. In the Somerfield area some of the snowdrops are up already growing among the specie crocus, now also beginning to herald their arrival, the yellow ones showing colour first, as they do!

A few of the daffodils generously given by the Staff of Carlisle Park, Morpeth, should be next to flower in this area, but the majority of these daffodils were planted in the Croft Meadow at the rear of the site around those five splendid lime trees—due to flower in early March, so please take note. Believe it or not there was a daffodil in flower during the last week in January around one of the memorial trees.

Later on the English (Wordsworth) daffodil should be appearing in the Runnymede Wood followed by Wood Anemone and Bluebells. All these I hasten to add take time to establish themselves, but hopefully in 2-3 years time they should be making a lovely show, fingers crossed.

Don't forget also about the cowslips, snakeshead fritillary and hoop petticoat daffodils planted in the Spring Meadow (near Tony's Corner), due to flower late March and April.

Dare I say that this is just the beginning of planting bulbs in the Park, and if all goes according to plan we should have a bulb planting session every Autumn, for the next few years, until we have reached our goal, just as we shall be regularly pulling Himalayan Balsam for the foreseeable future too. However let's hope that future bulb planting session will be less frantic and at a more leisurely pace.

May I add my thanks to all of you for your support, financially through donations, which are so vitally important to us, otherwise our plans would be non starters, It does not matter how willing we are, without your support financially we become merely 'tidiers of the park'; to those of you who come to give 'hands on' help with our projects; and to those of you who support us with your membership. **My Thanks to you all..**

Finally I would ask you to make a note of the date of the A.G.M. March 20th in Merton Hall, 7pm. Please come along. Hear and see what we have accomplished to date; what we plan for the future. We do need your support, so please join us. Refreshments will be available as always. Margaret

