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Friends of Ponteland Park

Newsletter

ISSUE 6

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The Seats Have Arrived.

It seems a long time ago since the idea for seat sponsorship was first suggested at a F.O.P.P. committee meeting. Within a very short time there were a number of interested local people wanting to sponsor a seat in the park. We located a local supplier, Norcraft from North Shields, and were more than delighted to discover that the firm worked with disadvantaged young people in the production of their benches. Firm orders were placed for seats. On April 30th 2007 all seven of our first cohort of seats were in place, with bases set and plaques in position. There was an official 'unveiling' attended by members of the Parish Council, F.O.P.P. committee and the sponsors. The seats have received many complimentary comments and orders for the final five are in the pipeline.



Mrs Rose Larmar in memory of her husband Kenneth



Ponteland Lions to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of their Charter.



Volunteering Tynedale



Mrs Anne Bolam in memory of her husband Tom



Mr & Mrs Peter Curran for their Golden Wedding



Mayor of Castle Morpeth. Mr Proudlock and Mrs Proudlock.

A.G.M.

Our second annual general meeting was held on March 21st in Merton Hall. Twenty four stalwart folk turned out on a dreadful wintry evening. The Chairman reported on F.O.P.P. achievements during the past year which included bulb and wild flower planting, snowdrop relocation, balsam pulling, tree planting, seat location, and orders for six park information boards being initiated. The Committee was re-elected en bloc and the evening was rounded off by a slide show provided by Mrs M. Sobo. We would like to thank all those folk who manfully turned out and hope that next year the A.G.M. will receive even more support.

Mindless Vandalism

Such a pity our notice board in the Fox Covert area of the park has been vandalised and is beyond repair, so sadly no further information will be available to park users in that area. Sorry, but we have no control over such mindless, wanton destruction. Please if anyone sees any suspicious behaviour within the park contact the police or phone 101. Thank you.

Autum Plans

F.O.P.P's are looking forward to the Autumn again (while hoping for a glorious summer of course) with tree/shrub and bulb planting already planned. We intend to rally local children to plant more trees and add a 400shrub understorey to the Young People's Wood These native plants will increase biodiversity but will also encourage the existing trees to grow up tall and straight.

We have already ordered some bulbs for planting in September including 3000 extra specie crocuses to expand the groups already planted. The grass bank down by the Memorial Hall should be brightened up by our 'Daffs for Dads' planting event during Sept/Oct we already have a sponsor who has ordered 500 Tête àTête daffodils for this area. Any further sponsors would be gratefully accepted. Dates and times will be advertised well in advance for these activities. Last year F.O.P.P. members came to help regularly with children working in the park. This help was invaluable and increased the children's enjoyment of the event.

Please consider helping by joining us this year on our planting days (no need to be able to dig for England,) an ability to explain things to children and increase their confidence and enjoyment is all that is necessary. Looking forward to seeing you. Sue

News And Views from Margaret

Party In the Park

The aim of our small exhibition was to show the work of F.O.P.P.'s in the Park and to encourage interest in local wild life. We had more than thirty examples of wild flowers displayed on our stall, together with part of our 'plant nursery; samples of native trees; wild bird care, as well as aquaria representing local river and pond life. The pond aquarium proved to be the 'star turn' as youngsters were able to see tadpoles, newts, dragon-fly larvae and many other pond creatures at close quarters.

Red squirrels are a very precious asset to Ponteland and regularly visit Runnymede and Fox Covert areas of the Park. If you are fortunate enough to have red squirrels in your garden, a feeder topped-up with Hazel nuts will help their survival as their natural food sources become less plentiful at this time of year.



Any sightings of grey squirrels should be reported to the S.O.S team.

As the middle of July approaches and if you are keen on butterflies, do visit the 'Top Meadow' adjacent to The Young People's Wood, preferably on a still warm, sunny day. Locate the clumps of Field Scabious and you should be able to see a number of different butterflies, including Meadow Brown and Small Skipper. Hover flies and bees also congregate in this area particularly where the bramble and wild raspberry are in flower.

Plans to enrich this area with more summer flowering plants depends on how successful we are in cutting and boxing the grass area in the Autumn.

Lastly, you'll be pleased to know that the 3 extra nest boxes put up by Mike and Ian earlier this year are occupied with very happy, hardworking and no doubt grateful tenants, and there are no other vacancies!

We are encouraged:::

Thankfully, we have achieved, and are enjoying, seven of our twelve allotted seats in the Park and, amazingly, we have sponsors for the five remaining six foot seats. We have just heard that the Parish Council has kindly agreed to continue to fund the installation of these, so full steam ahead!!

So we move on to our next big project. We are in the final stages of preparation for the six Information Boards for our Park Entrances – did you see the draft at our stand in Party in the Park? Their installation should begin, we hope, in late July and will be a great help to all who use our lovely Park. This could not happen without the financial support of the Parish Council, Castle Morpeth Borough Council Community Fund and, of course, yourselves. A huge thank you to all.

Membership: Renewals and donations have come in amazingly well from over 190 of you! There are still some 50 or so who will have received reminders with this newsletter – don't let us lose you – we need your help too!

Work in the Park on Tuesday evenings (meeting at 7pm in the Memorial Hall car park) is going well. Just come along and join us in the onslaught on the Himalayan Balsam, nurturing the Young People's Wood, reclaiming overgrown areas from brambles and nettles for replanting in the autumn, etc. You'll be most welcome. Repeated (many times) vandalism of both Notice Boards is most discouraging – which explains why they have not worked so well lately. We will try again!!!!!!



Two intrepid Friends of Ponteland Park who will let nothing stand in their way in the battle against the Balsam



Finally we are ever grateful to Cowell's Garden Centre and Ponteland Print for their continued generosity in sponsoring this newsletter — positive support by local people for our Park. Alma

