

FRIENDS OF



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



It was with much regret that our rescheduled date for the Summer Party had to be cancelled. The fact that over 75 members had planned to attend the event indicated how anxious so many of you were to come together following a long period of enforced absence. Members will appreciate that, with the pandemic in full swing, it was simply impossible for the Tearooms to second guess whether they would be able to provide sufficient staffing for the evening. Should we have delayed until the last moment and then learnt that the event was cancelled, it isn't difficult to imagine how stressful it would have been notifying disappointed members of the cancellation. A further postponement to early September was not an option as there are several social events planned for that time.

On a brighter note, next year's Summer Party, in preparation for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, promises to be something rather special. We do indeed have some ground to make up and the committee will be planning a celebratory occasion that we can all look forward to. *Michael Olding*

The FOSP committee are working hard behind the scenes looking forward to a Christmas get together at Stansted House.....so please read your Newsletter for up-to-date information. (Editor)

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Stansted Park is Unlocked! Well, of a sorts, but people remain cautious and the 'pingdemic' certainly doesn't help. I appreciate that we are not yet through the pandemic but our event on 10th and 11th July certainly marked a key way point out of the spiral of gloom and gave people something to cheer them up and raise their spirits.

'Stansted Unlocked!' was a fabulous indicator that we are on the road back to normality at last and it really does feel that we are slowly restoring the equilibrium that we previously enjoyed. Although the weather could have been kinder, Stansted Park saw nearly 900 visitors enter the grounds along with an array of white clad cricketers from I Zingari and the Earl of Bessborough's XI, Army Cadets and 70 Re-enactors in their Napoleonic uniforms showing off their cavalry and musketry drills.

The highlight of the weekend was watching the Band of The Grenadier Guards perform the spectacular display of Beating Retreat; we were extremely fortunate to secure this world renowned and iconic Band and they did not disappoint! The sight of the 35 strong band marching in front of the Mansion was extremely stirring and something to remember.

Of course, the key rationale for the weekend was the formal inauguration of the Waterloo and Victoria Room upon which one of our Trustees, Yanni Petsopoulos, and Aleramo Lanza, the Great Grandson of the 9th Earl of Bessborough, have lavished many months of tireless dedication. They have, with painstaking attention to detail, devised the displays, sourced material and laid out the exciting new displays, although there are some continuing refinements to be made. They have been assiduous and highly imaginative in reordering and rearranging the Mansion so that the lay out is more coherent and logical to better tell the rich and colourful history of the Ponsonby family and the Stansted Park Estate. This has much improved the Visitor Route as well as reinvested the Mansion as a prime attraction, containing, as it does, artefacts of national significance. We are all very grateful to Yanni and Aleramo for their Herculean efforts, which were completed in the nick of time for the official opening. The Trustees were very pleased to welcome Gillian Keegan, the MP for Chichester, to open the Room; General Sir Barney White-Spunner gave a short talk on the Battle of Waterloo with General Evelyn Webb-Carter, the Chairman of the Waterloo 200 Committee who was also in attendance.

It was a very good occasion and it was a joy to see Michael Olding and Anne and Roger Burton at the ceremony representing FOSP, who have done so much in the way of financial support to this important project as well as providing general encouragement as the Estate reverts to

normality! There is much that is new for the House Volunteers to get to grips with and my sincere thanks to all of them who have coped with the new layout and narrative magnificently and have made House Opening possible.

The many walks continue to be enjoyed as do the Grounds and especially so now that the Arboretum is open again, with the Dutch Garden looking absolutely splendid. My thanks to the gallant band of Garden Volunteers who have contributed so much in a short space of time to making the Grounds look incredible and cheerfully supporting the work of Jed Burch.

It will take a while until the levels of confidence among the public return to normal but we are well on our way with much to look forward to. Collectively, we are determined to emerge from the pandemic stronger, acting as a beacon for the general public as well as providing a very special place in which our commercial, retail and residential tenants can thrive. Onwards and Upwards! *David Bennett (Photographs Davin Bennett and Editor)*



HEAD FORESTER'S NOTES - AUTUMN 2021

One of my mother's favourite sayings was "Be careful what you wish for" and this has proved its wisdom this year. In my last piece, I was worried for our new plantings in the dry and windy spring. Almost to the day of the newsletter's delivery, it has rained in almost biblical measures apart from an early sunny spell and the mini heat wave the week I was away in the Yorkshire Dales, where it seemed every man and his dog were making hay. The rain has had varying effects, some positive and others not so. It was too late to save the conifers planted last winter, which have failed in large numbers, but our broadleaved plantings are looking good after a decent soaking. I have had to stop the extraction of the ash felled in Lordington Wood, otherwise we would have had unacceptable damage to the rides and soil structure. I just hope it dries out enough to get it out before the autumn rains arrive.

Our contractors have almost finished the felling of ash planned for this year, as I have withdrawn several areas that, at present, are looking much better than last year and most trees have full leaf. This does not mean that we will not have to fell them in the future but a more truncated approach will suit our work programme. We will of course continue to fell individual trees and groups that show advanced disease in areas of heavy public usage.



Spotted Orchids

I am pleased to report a second year of success with our lapwings. The single pair that nested this year hatched all four eggs and moved their chicks to the area around the new wildlife pond where there was abundant insect life for them to feast on. Unfortunately, all four disappeared within a few days, victims to a predator and the heron that was seen nearby at the time is the most likely culprit. However, the hen bird soon laid a new clutch and this time when the chicks hatched, they kept them in the edge of the arable crop where there was more cover. This did not stop the crows and buzzards trying their luck but these wonderful birds are tenacious in their defence of the chicks. We believe some were lost but the last time Caroline from the RSPB, who has helped with the monitoring, saw them there were two young birds flying strongly with an adult whilst the other adult was on guard nearby.



Six Spotted Burnet

The weather has disrupted hay cutting but Colin and Terry got a good proportion done, including half of the Bean Field, which has not been cut for hay before and will hopefully help it floristically. The main field of Rosamond's Hill looking up from the drive has been a spectacle this year. Once the Highland cattle were removed, we had a plethora of wild flowers coming through including hundreds of spotted orchids. Walking through it, I was struck by the mass of insects. Butterflies were in abundance and included small heath, meadow brown, ringlet, painted lady, common blue, grizzled skipper, small copper and a six spotted burnet moth. This field shows the huge benefits to accrue from converting a proportion of land to non-intensive systems. **Michael Prior**

GARDENING NOTES



The recent wind and rain have hampered us all but we have not missed our Thursday mornings, if rather damp at times. A lull followed early summer colour in the Walled Garden but now the Echinacea and Cannas have become really established and there is also a fine show of day lilies and Crocosmia.

Many different bees and butterflies and other insects are very prolific and welcome, except perhaps the box moth caterpillar. We'll have to spray all the box with an insecticide before they cause too much damage. Thankfully the treatment is very successful and the plant recovers.

It has been lovely to welcome visitors to the Well Head again. They love to stop and chat and tell us how special the grounds are to them. A surprising number explore the Lime Walk and sit in the arbour at the far end. They are all so interested and encouraging, often asking for advice or plant naming and we do our best to help.

It takes two to three years to establish a replanted border and we were particularly pleased to welcome Dimi Sopsis who, as previous Head Gardener, headed the Replanting project in the Walled Garden. He spent the morning working with us on July 29th and chatting about his work, including the projected stand at Chelsea next year! We look forward to his next visit. **Tessa Culley**



PLANNED TRIP & TALKS



After many months we are now able to tell you about the trip we are running on 15th September 2021 and talks on 11th November in 2021 (see page 3) and 5th May in 2022 on Owls.

The talk on 11th November is being given by Professor Lloyd Peck of the British Antarctic Survey. He will be speaking on 'Surviving Antarctic Extremes' - *How people and animals cope in the coldest place on earth.*

I urge you to put this date in your diary as Lloyd is a highly respected and experienced scientist and has given the Royal Institution lectures on 'Life in Antarctica and Climate Change'.

Details and Booking Forms for the visit to Polesden Lacey, a National Trust Property, and FOSP Cream Tea were sent separately by post and by email. It is very important that you reply as soon as possible so we can confirm and pay for the coach by the end of August.

We look forward to seeing you at these events. **Chris, Nigel and Benny**

LUMLEY WOOD AND ROSAMOND HILL



Eighteen Friends met in the Garden Centre car park on a sunny Wednesday afternoon for the first walk of the decade! We departed with Michael in the lead and Celia covering first aid at the rear.

The first stop, added to the trip by Jed, who had spotted a Privet Hawk moth on the fence as we started was a bonus. After a short discussion on the merits of moths, we then stopped at the Black Locust trees beside the drive. These were first brought from America to Europe in 1601; a spiny tree with very hard timber that re-generated from the remaining suckers from the storm of 1987, the original trees being used for straining posts on the Broadwalk, which are still there. We then looked at the Orange Grove where



only one ash remains. This area has now been replanted and includes London Plane trees. Then forward to Lumley Wood, a beautiful beech wood planted in 1957, which has been thinned. At the top stand a collection of Japanese Larch. In the area, laurel has been cleared which, unfortunately, means that there is now nowhere for the pheasants to hide! The Plantation, which was cleared and replanted in 2018 with broadleaved trees, is doing very well. Passing by the Forest school we were shown a large ash tree and owl box. Finally, and most memorable, we arrived at Rosamond Hill which has been developed into a wildflower meadow, helped by the grazing of the highland cattle. Thank you Michael and Celia for a most enjoyable and informative afternoon stroll.

Sarah Hutchinson (Photographs Michael Parry)

FOSP TALK BY LLOYD PECK - 11TH NOVEMBER 2021



Lloyd Peck

Lloyd is a scientist at the forefront of investigation into animal adaptations in extreme environments. He leads a dedicated, innovative team of polar biologists evaluating how species live in the coldest, driest, windiest, most isolated place on earth. He has had many field visits to Antarctica in his over 30 years studying life in polar regions, and over 25 years experience of media presentations and interviews.

His current interests are in how adaptation to specific environments affects animal's abilities to respond to change, and how to get the best data to make these evaluations. His most recent ventures have been to conduct environmental experimental manipulations in situ on the sea bed. He is also very interested in why growth and development rates of polar species appear to be even slower than would be predicted by the low temperature, and why proteins appear to be much more difficult to manufacture at temperatures around 0°C.

Lloyd graduated from Jesus College, Cambridge University in 1978 and obtained a PhD from Portsmouth University in 1983 on the optimum conditions for cultivating the European abalone, *Haliotis tuberculata*. At the end of this he ate the animals he had grown and is one of the few scientists to have eaten their PhD! In 1984 he joined the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) as a postdoctoral Higher Scientific Officer. Over the last 20 years he has led large-scale biological programmes at BAS of up to 30 people with science ranging from gene expression through cellular and animal physiology to population genetics, community and ecosystem ecology in mainly polar marine and terrestrial systems, but also throughout the globe.



RRS Sir David Attenborough

He is a Fellow of the Royal Institution; a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London; a member of the Marine Biological Association of the UK and a member of the Society for Experimental Biology.

Professor Peck gave the Royal Institution Christmas Lectures broadcast on Channel 4 TV in 2004, on Life in Antarctica and Climate Change. This was followed by televised lecture series on similar subjects in Japan and Korea in 2005 and in Brazil in 2007.

Chris Freeborough.

(Editor's note: Lloyd was a student of Tessa Cully's husband Michael, at Portsmouth University, where he obtained his PhD.

BOOKSHOP NOW OPEN!

The bookshop (in the Garden Centre) continues to be very busy. Many people have been tidying their homes during lockdown and they have donated their unwanted books to us, which means we have a very good stock of most types of book. Our sales figures for May and June have been wonderful, but we need you to buy our books to make room for all the ones that are waiting to be put out on the shelves. Why not pop in to buy something to read on holiday?

We are still happy to receive books, but please only give us books that are clean and in good condition. One or two people have used us as an easy way to dispose of rubbish, but this doesn't really help anyone. **We are also NOT able to take magazines, DVDs, CDs jigsaw puzzles or any more reference books, and we have reluctantly decided NOT to take any more children's books at the moment as nobody seems to be buying them.**

There is now one of our brilliant team of bookshop volunteers in the shop for part of every week day, and sometimes at weekends. They can be spotted in their bottle green aprons, and they may be able to help you find just the book you are looking for.

Please come and see us any time the Garden Centre is open, and don't forget to pay for your books at the Garden Centre till.

Janet Mynors

FOSP CREAM TEA 2ND SEPTEMBER - WITH 'THE TOTTIES'



After sell out successes at London's most sought after cabaret rooms *The Crazy Coqs* and *The Pheasantry*, talented duo **Carolyn Allen** and **Paul Smith** are thrilled to be entertaining us at the FOSP Cream Tea on the 2nd September 2021.

In 2020 they were thrilled to be invited to join Oceania on *Insignia* for the World Cruise as Social Host and Hostess performing their Cabaret and, following tradition, they formed a passenger choir *Sing Out Loud* to great acclaim.

A familiar face on television, Carolyn appeared in *New Tricks*, *Only Fools And Horses* and *Slingers Day*. Her London West End credits include *Les Miserables*, *Two Into One*, *See How They Run* and *Pirates Of Penzance* at Drury Lane. She has also played all the mezzo roles in *The Gilbert and Sullivan Operettas*.

Paul was Danny La Rue's musical director on stage and television as well as an MD in the West End and for Ronnie Corbett, Anthony Newley, Pam Ayres, Sheila Steafel, Janie Dee and the late great Dame Hilda Bracket. He recently made a TV appearance in the last series of ITV's *Endeavour* and *What A Performance* with Frank Skinner and Suzy Klein for BBC 4.

Carolyn & Paul enjoy huge success on stage, on cruises and at music festivals in the UK and abroad with a wit and style that spans jazz to opera, revue to musical theatre and their own sparkling opera parodies. **Numbers are limited so please book**

Paul Bennett

NEWS FROM THE HOUSE

We started the House Opening Season with some drama. At 9pm on the Friday before the grand opening, I discovered I had to self-isolate as my son tested positive for Covid. This left my colleagues and volunteer stewards with the responsibility to hold the show together in the House for our VIP Opening event. They coped admirably and I cannot thank them enough for stepping up to the challenge. Over 350 visitors enjoyed the new displays each day over the 'Stansted Unlocked' weekend.



Animal Safari Trail in Action!

Since then, opening has run relatively smoothly. We have found great benefit from the use of an on-line ticketing system for pre-booking, ensuring people who visit our website can book straight away. Visitors can still buy their tickets on the door. Another new addition has been our Safari Trail for children under 10. They can pick up a pair of binoculars at the Front Desk and go in search of the wildlife that can be found hidden around the rooms in the Mansion.

Over the two years since we last opened, we have said goodbye to a number of House Stewards who have decided to retire after many years of service. These include Diane Chelu, Margaret Dormer, Margaret Rowe, Janet Barradell, Barbara Hammond and James Hawkins. We would like to express how grateful we have been for their dedication to Stansted over the years and hope they enjoy their well deserved retirement.

We are always looking for new enthusiastic volunteers to help with House opening. In fact we have trained and introduced Stansted to nine new House Stewards this Season, but we are ready for more, so do let us know if you, or someone you know, would like to get involved. Everyone receives a full induction and training. So you can come with as little or as much knowledge about the House and the Estate – and we can help with the rest!

We look forward to welcoming you and your guests over the rest of the season.

Celia Hodges



THE GARDEN SHOW - 11th to 13th JUNE



The Garden Show! What a joy to behold – an explosion of colour – a cacophony of happy sounds, as people mingled amongst the many attractions on offer – a taste of Freedom, almost as if Stansted Park had risen like a Phoenix from the Pandemic ashes. And what wonderful attractions there were; stall after stall, marque after marque and many, many varied exhibits. The choices to buy, or simply just to look at, included clothing, jewellery arts and crafts, accessories, intricate glass work, paintings, plants, sculptures garden ornaments, garden furniture and food. Indeed, the food marquee was, as usual, extremely popular and had, amongst other things, free samples of chocolates, cheeses and liqueurs to taste. With demonstrations of birds of prey to watch and music supplied by The Jazz Trio and also Dawn Gracie, the good quantity of seating that was available was very welcome. It was, without doubt, a beautiful extravaganza and an excellent show. Well done to the Stansted Team for getting almost normality back to the World. **Valerie Godwin**



HONEY TO MAINTAIN HEALTH & NERVES - A VITAL PART OF DIET

By RUTH LEAVER [TOMALIN] - June 1943

This is an extract from one of Ruth's wartime articles but is as relevant today with continuing news of the decline of honey-bees throughout a world which relies so much on their existence. Coincidentally, it was one of the subjects included in Countryfile on BBC 1, Sunday 25th July, one of my favourite programmes - Jill Waring

'A field of scented clover, filled on a sunny June day by thousands of foraging honey-bees, seems far removed from the depths of the sea where submarines keep watch for enemies of Britain. But the men under the sea know that for their good health and steady nerves, they are in debt to thousands of small winged workers who extract from the clover the honey that is a vital part of their diet.

Beekeeping has, in wartime, become important in several ways. Last season, in response to a special appeal, 111 tons of honey were subscribed by the British beekeepers for submarine crews. As a food for children, honey is also considered a fine supplement to wartime rations.

Another vital service rendered to the nation by bees is the safer fertilisation of fruit blossoms. Plum, apple and cherry orchards fertilised by bees instead of being left to the caprice of spring winds, have been found by growers to yield far larger crops and evenly developed fruits.

It is interesting to notice that a foraging bee always keeps to one 'line' in her work. If she starts on white clover she will not switch over to foxglove or honeysuckle until all the clover is finished.'

Ruth concluded her authoritative article with.... 'The Exception - A Portsmouth bee-keeper tells the story of an expert who was giving a lecture at the last agricultural show held in the City. "Now the bee is a perfectly docile and gentle creature, he declared. You need not be afraid of getting stung." At this point two bees appeared from one of the colonies being exhibited and, in perfect unison, stung him on either side of the nose. The lecturer, to his credit, did not move a muscle, but his lecture was brought to a hasty conclusion!' **Ruth Tomalin.**



Echium wildpretii

Today the Canary Islands have a number of species of which the best known is the Canary Black Bee which has adapted to the temperate volcanic environment at a height of 3000 metres by making the most of the rich variety of endemic flora. It stands out from others for its docility and is also characterised by being obsessed with the cleanliness of its hive, thereby making itself less vulnerable to illnesses. A single bee is able to produce approximately 15kg of honey a year!

Honey on Tenerife is classified by High Mountain, Foothills and Coastal Honey, with the Teide mountain honey being especially good with nectar taken from the Teide Daisy and Red Bugloss. Hives are moved within each level to where wildflowers and crops are growing at different times of year to ensure all the island bees can pollinate at flowering time.

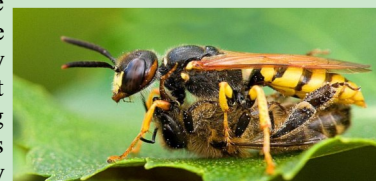
Sadly, the Canary Islands have 247 plant species in the maximum risk category for threatened flora in Spain - fortunately not including the two mentioned but worrying none-the-less.

Another risk factor for the Canary Black Bee is the large amount of cross-breeding with foreign bees which has taken place over the years and the strong decrease in its population by attacks of a wasp known as the beewolf.

Moreover, all over the world, bees are dying from a variety of factors: pesticides, drought, habitat destruction, air pollution and global warming. Sadly, humans are largely responsible for the two most prominent causes: pesticides and habitat loss.

Stansted, due to those who care for the biodiversity of its forest, parkland and gardens, provides a happier outlook for the continuing survival of all these immensely important workers.

Jill Waring July 2021 (photographs supplied by Jill)



Death of a Bee by a Beewolf Wasp



ON HARTING DOWN

The world was only springing turf, and dew and little flowers.
I shared it with a bumble-bee and all of it was ours;
And there within the cool green world we spent a life together,
Among the lady's slipper blooms and little bells of heather.

The slanting sunbeams warmly fell and oh! our lives were long:
All day we heard our heather bells, rustle their small dry song.
There forests grew of sweet wild thyme that whispered in the breeze;
And dew like opals, sunbeam gilt, made elfin pools and seas

But twilight chilled my little bee; he winged far into space;
And I shall never find again that small, green, perfect place.

Ruth Tomalin



SUMMER SONG

Our summer song
Will linger long
Through autumn's gold
And winter's cold.

Valerie Godwin



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2021

2021 HOUSE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AUGUST

Friday 20th - The Bootleg Beatles Tribute Band
(Gates Open: 4pm)

Saturday 21st - The Proms (Gates Open: 4pm)

SEPTEMBER

Friday 3rd

The Great Gatsby Outdoor Theatre in
The Walled Gardens.

Friday 10th - Murder Mystery Evening

Thursday 16th - Musical Evening

OCTOBER

Thursday 14th - Musical Evening

Saturday 30th - Halloween Event including Ghost Stories

NOVEMBER

Friday 26th to Saturday 27th - 'A Christmas Carol'
Immersive Theatre in Stansted House

DECEMBER

Thursday 2nd to Sunday 19th - Christmas at Stansted Park

Friday 10th - Musical Evening with Peter Auty

Thursday 16th—Carol Service

**For more information please contact the office on
023 9241 2265 or enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk
Please Support Stansted House**

NOTE: There is a FOSP Member's discount on events
where applicable. Contact the House for further information.

FOSP MEMBER EVENTS - 2021

COVID information will be updated in line with any changes
in Government policy.

THURSDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER

FOSP CREAM TEA

with Musical Entertainment - The Totties
£7.00 for FOSP Members £8.00 for non-members
(Numbers are limited so please book)

EXTERNAL VISIT TO POLESDEN LACEY

WEDNESDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

We hope that the venue and transport will be opened up by
then. It is possible that there may still be some restrictions on
seating in the coach which it is hoped that we will know by
the time the booking forms go out. See separate booking
form issued by mail or email.

TALK BY PROFESSOR LLOYD PECK

Thursday 11th November 2021.

The talk on 11th November is being given by Professor
Lloyd Peck of the British Antarctic Survey. He will be
speaking on 'Surviving Antarctic Extremes' (*How people and
animals cope in the coldest place on earth*).

I urge you to put this date in your diary as Lloyd is a
highly experienced scientist and has given the Royal
Institution lectures on 'Life in Antarctica and Climate
Change'.

If you have queries for any of the Events, please contact the
providers directly via their websites or call the Estate Office
on **023 9241 2265**.

MEMBERS NOW HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PAY BY CARD

Simply call the Estate Office (mornings only, before 12.00
please) giving names, stating whether members or not, a
contact telephone number, and have your card details to hand.

If you would prefer to pay by cheque, please send details
of names, stating whether members or not, a contact
telephone number, and your cheque, **payable to Friends of
Stansted Park** to:-

**Anne Burton, 'Dapplend', Walnut Drive, Woodmancote,
Emsworth, PO10 8QH**

Parking in the Staff Car Park use the "Offices" entrance
(not the Garden Centre entrance)

CONTACTING STANSTED HOUSE

For a general enquiry, or for information about visits and so-
cial events, please telephone, email or write to:-

The Estate Office
Stansted Park Foundation
Stansted Park
Rowlands Castle
Hampshire
PO9 6DX

Telephone No: 023 9241 2265

Email: enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk

For FOSP Membership Enquiries contact
Paul Bennett (see column on right)

HEAD FORESTER'S WALKS

Wednesday 18th August at 2.00pm

Meet in Mansion Staff car park (not the Garden Centre
car park) to look at last season's coppicing and felling of
large conifers in Firtree Piece.

Tuesday 7th September, 2.00pm

Meet in German's Yard (left turn from road to
Forestsides) to look at work encouraging natural
re-generation in the northern forest.

COMMITTEE MEMBER CONTACT POINTS

Chairman:- Michael Olding
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Secretary:- Anne Burton
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Treasurer:- Sarah Hutchinson
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Membership:- Paul Bennett
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Newsletter Editor:- Robert Godwin
crana.crana@ntlworld.com

NEXT FOSP NEWSLETTER COPY DATE

Friday 29th October 2021

**Have you an anecdote, article or news for the Newsletter
then please contact the Editor**