

FRIENDS OF STANSTED PARK



CHAIRMAN'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE



Jill Waring

By any measure, COVID-19 has been devastating. Members will have their own experiences and, as for the fortunes of the Foundation, we are indebted to David's regular bulletins and Michael's Head Forester's notes. In the absence of all our social gatherings, it hardly needs to be said how crucial our Newsletter stands as our principle mode of communication. It anchors our relationships, keeps us in the picture and provides articles of interest. Robert and Valerie, as editors, together with all contributors, are to be congratulated for maintaining a newsletter of such high quality.

Despite the lockdowns and other frustrations, it is a comfort to know, as David reminds us, that Stansted remains an important community asset for public recreation. We can only hope that favourable circumstances will allow the House and Gardens to re-open in the spring and the various Retail Outlets to bounce back to something like normality. I am sure you would wish me to remind all associated with the Foundation, that the Friends' staunch support will continue whatever course this pandemic takes. The Committee join me in sending Seasons Greetings to both the Foundation and FOSP. We thank and value all members for their on-going support and look forward to such times when we can enjoy being together again. *Michael Olding*

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Firstly, I would like to express my thanks to all the Friends for their patience in dealing with the continuing uncertainty created by the Coronavirus pandemic. The situation is clearly not resolved yet and will continue to cause anxiety for many a month to come.

This summer has certainly been very different from previous ones. The pandemic has made significant changes to our daily lives, the manner in which we are able to interact with each other and our pursuit of leisure activities. Whilst the House and Gardens have been shut to the general public during the season, the Park seems to have been as busy as ever. The increasing number of people who have discovered the beauty of Stansted is quite remarkable; it has been particularly pleasing to see so many more families enjoying the Estate's many footpaths and vistas, perhaps for the first time.

Stansted Park has definitely proved its value in providing plenty of outdoor space for people to let off steam during the lockdown, as well as some retail therapy in our excellent Farm Shop, Tea Rooms and Garden Centre. These businesses have had to cope with a great deal over the last few months, not quite knowing which regulations will come next and for how long they will last. They have clearly demonstrated their versatility and made the most of the circumstances to provide a professional service to their customers. All of this is a testament to their business resolve and desire to ensure that Stansted remains firmly on the map and 'Open for Business'.

The Proms weekend went very well and was much enjoyed, as was the Garden Show, with people obviously being very keen to get out and about. It was very good to see the Friends' gazebo being manned throughout the weekend and in a much more prominent position this year.

This stoicism and positive outlook over the summer months perhaps belies some other concerns for the Foundation. The situation remains fluid as businesses adjust to the ending of the furlough scheme and public confidence being affected. The winter could prove challenging and we will need to marshal our reserves of determination to see us through. The Foundation has been examining its structure and operations which has led to some difficult decisions. Very sadly, Dan Cook the House Manager, will be leaving us and I want to record his tremendous contribution to Stansted Park and the incredible work he has done in the Mansion, looking after the chattels and dealing with the complex aspects of public opening. I know that he has been a great ally of the Friends, being very supportive, and I appreciate that he will be sorely missed by a great many people throughout the Estate. We wish him and his family all the very best during these difficult times.

Developments to the visitor route are underway in the Mansion with the opening up of the doorway in the Waterloo and Victoria Room which will enable a full circuit of the ground floor of the Mansion to be undertaken by visitors. It is hoped that the new display will be ready for the spring and, once again, I would like to thank the Friends for their most generous donation to enable the purchase of a display cabinet. Your continuing support and engagement to the Foundation is hugely appreciated. I am extremely confident that we will emerge from this crisis with a new approach and fresh ideas, with Stansted Park continuing to provide unparalleled public benefit, offering a beacon of hope and a tranquil refuge to many people. *David Bennett*

DAN COOK HOUSE MANAGER

I am sure you will all be saddened to know that the Foundation will be losing Dan's services. The impact of COVID-19 has forced the Foundation to make some difficult decisions in respect of staffing as they seek to re-organise and reconstruct. David Bennet's article above sets out the situation as it currently stands.

During the time that Dan has been at Stansted, the FOSP and Volunteers have come to value both his professional expertise and the genuine support he has given to our endeavours. He has given up much of his own time to attend our committee meetings and willingly followed up any subsequent line of enquiry.

COVID-19 has much to answer for. We send Dan and his family our appreciation for all his efforts of support and our very best wishes for the future.

Michael Olding

CHRISTMAS 2020 (The Year of Covid-19)



Jill Waring

Our Christmas time is here again
But this year it is not the same.
No carols sung, no friends to meet,
No family to hug and greet,
No happy laughter, carefree fun,
Nor freedom; victory not yet won
And we must celebrate alone,
In tiny groups or on our own.
Yet we have love to keep us warm
And shield us from all kinds of harm,
So, as we look towards New Year,
We reach with hope and thankful cheer.

Valerie Godwin

HEAD FORESTER'S NOTES WINTER 2020



Winter on the Forest Floor (Michael Parry)

The hour has gone back and the nights are drawing in and, by the time you read this, we should have received our first consignment of trees numbering some five and a half thousand, the greater part of which will be going into the first phase of our programme to replace ash felled due to disease. The two areas we will be concentrating on are the Sling, adjacent to Rowlands Castle village and the Escarpment. The first site is the area of the Estate that the majority of our visitors know well, along with the Main Avenue. We will be replanting the large open areas with oak and a scattering of other natives and a few ornamental species. The replanting of one area is being funded by members of the family as a Memorial to the memory of Lady Mary Bessborough, the wife of the 10th Earl, who was so supportive of the Foundation from its inception, along with many other good causes. The area I have chosen for this is next to a small block of oak planted on 22nd November 1970 by the Havant Division of the Girl Guides, with Lady Bessborough, when she was regularly involved in the

Guides movement. This commemorated the Diamond Jubilee of the Girl Guides and I believe the girls had raised their trees from acorns. Lord Bessborough also planted a tree in his capacity as President of the 'Men of the Trees'. This will be a fitting tribute to her and a link between the two areas.



During the second half of October, we regularly saw a barn owl hunting in good light during the late afternoon in the Sling, a place I have not recorded them before. It is possible that the more open habitat created by ash felling has increased the number of mice and voles and allowed it to hunt more easily in an area that would have previously been the realm of the tawny owl. Unfortunately, we recently found a freshly dead barn owl on the side of the park road close to the Mansion, most likely killed by a speeding vehicle as it drifted across the road between the two feeding areas of West Park and Rosamond's Hill. It is not easy to tell but features of the talons suggested a young bird. It did not have a leg ring so was not from the brood we ringed on the Estate, so could be either from a brood I did not find or a young bird from outside the area looking for a territory. Only a week or so later a buzzard was found sitting on a bollard next to the park road at Middle Lodge looking very sorry for itself. I boxed it up and took it to Brent Lodge Wildlife Hospital so it has the best chance of recovery. These two incidents illustrate the heavy loss that birds of prey populations suffer in their first year out of the nest but all part of nature's survival of the fittest.



After a slow start due to the very dry conditions, our crop of dwarf sunflowers put on quite a show in mid-September and I hope there will now be a good volume of seeds to sustain farmland birds as the weather deteriorates. I will also be filling the seed hoppers and spreading mixed seed by hand from December.



I would like to wish you all the very best for Christmas, even though it is going to be very different from the ones we have become used to but maybe that might not be a bad thing. Government and COVID-19 willing, I plan to start our guided walks on the Estate again in the spring, as I am confident we can carry them out safely and, after all, what can be better for your mental and physical health than getting out amongst the trees.

Michael Prior (all photographs by Michael Prior except where identified)

MICHAEL PRIOR - HEAD FORESTER



On September 1st 1990, Michael Prior began his duties as Head Forester with the Stansted Park Foundation. The FOSP Committee, wishing to recognise this achievement of 30 years service, presented Michael and his wife, Steph, with a small gift and card to recognise Michael's valuable work on the Estate and, particularly, with the Friends.

Editor

GARDENING NOTES



Show of Beautiful Nerines

Autumnal colours have been wonderfully vibrant in the grounds this year in the trees and on the ground. Cyclamen, under the trees by the Chapel, are creating beautiful carpets and the walled garden has a magnificent show of Nerines, visible even though growing in the cordoned off area.

The volunteers have been busy assisting Jed, despite the variable weather, to ensure that all areas will be beautiful when full public access resumes, we hope, in the spring.

Trevor, who has assisted Jed, as well as being the major carer for grassy areas, is leaving the team and his cheerful assistance to the Volunteers will be missed. We wish him well in his new employment.

At this time of year, if you are gardening, bending over herbaceous borders, do be careful of uncapped stakes or brittle stems - one of our volunteers narrowly missed serious eye injury in this way in her own garden.

Enjoy your gardens but do be vigilant! *Tessa Culley*

THE LADY IN THE WHITE DRESS

(Loelia and her rightful place in the Ponsonby archive (1902 – 1993))



Following on from the last Newsletter Please can we get one thing straight. Loelia Mary Ponsonby was typical of her generation and the *'fast set'*. When in her late teens and early twenties she was a fun loving, party going, young lady but she was also much more than just that!

Her education started with a series of French mademoiselles, who were mostly untrained and uncaring, followed by a short time at Heathfields School for Young Ladies, where she had her first taste of real friendship, tuition and success. She was happy there, still shy but she devoured all the literature she could lay her hands on and enjoyed the fun and friendship that was available.

Her life was spoilt by the horrendous, sad marriage to Bendor, Duke of Westminster. A less strong character would have been finished by that strange experience. However, after the separation, Loelia was able, with the help of her many friends, to build a life of her own.

She had, when a teenager, organised the Ponsonby family to write a contribution twice a year to the 'Tanglewood News', which, with the help of her father, she circulated around the family and even judged the best entry. This experience became very useful when she was asked by the editor of the prestigious magazine 'House and Gardens', to become the Features Editor (Houses and their gardens) in 1952. For this, she travelled to China and many other countries and even managed a very successful lecture tour of Australia, the money for that being typically spent on a first class journey back, taking in the sights such as Angkor Wat and Pagan.

She was a very successful Chair of the 'Appeal Executive Committee', which raised the money for the founding of the 'Yvonne Arnaud Theatre' in Guildford, started by Sir Michael Redgrave.

Loelia organised and exhibited at an 'Exhibition for the Embroiders' Guild' in London which was considered the reason for much of the rise in interest in hand embroidery after the 2nd World War.

She persuaded Queen Mary to exhibit one of her embroidered carpets and also to open the exhibition. She became a friend of the Queen Mother's, who she first met when she was the Duchess of York.

It is true, and cannot be denied, that Loelia did have passing affairs, between her marriages. It was not until the late 1960's that she at last found her soulmate in the guise of Sir Martin Lindsay. This match was 'utter married bliss' until his death in 1981. She was heart broken but, helped again by her true friends, she lived to the age of 91.

Loelia kept a daily diary from 1914 until her death in 1993 and we are privileged to have these as one of the many interesting items in the Sir John Ponsonby Collection at Stansted House. He was her uncle and Godfather and he obviously was very fond of her indeed. She could be described as 'loose' but as her oldest friend, Sir Cecil Beaton, the photographer, said of her, *'She was one of the kindest people and sincerest friend one could ever hope to have.'*

So please, when you next look at the painting of her in her wonderful white dress in Stansted House, please think more kindly of her. She was much more than just one of the 'Bright Young Things', or the Duchess, or the prototype for 'Moneypenny' or 'Lady Lindsay'. She was her own woman and her many friends bear witness to her greatest gift of kindness to them!

I am an archivist who has been working on the Sir John Ponsonby Archive for the past four years at Stansted House and have been fortunate in looking at Loelia's complete diaries in the collection and would dearly like to scotch the idea that she was just 'fast and loose'. There was much more to her than that, but it would take too long to explain her complicated life fully. Let us give her a little of the respect that she deserves! Diana Roberts

IN THE NICK OF TIME



Just before the beginning of October, when things seemed to be improving for events on the COVID-19 front, the Government suddenly announced a significant reduction in the number of wedding guests allowed to attend a marriage in England, causing chaos and upset for couples who had their hearts set on the attendance of just thirty important guests.

As soon as this information was released in an announcement by Boris Johnson (on a Tuesday), the two couples who had booked their weddings for the following week were on the phone asking if we could possibly bring everything forward to Saturday and Sunday to enable them to keep their guests as planned. This was workable from Stansted's perspective but heavily relied upon our caterer's availability. After many telephone calls and much shuffling of chefs, florists and cake makers, all was in place and able to go ahead.

We had two magical days of love and laughter and, despite the restrictions, both couples had a wonderful time surrounded by family and close friends.

The entire Stansted team are to be commended on their combined effort and determination to make this happen. All the rooms were brought to life, terraces jet washed and lawns mown, all within the space of a day or so and the event staff worked all weekend to support our couples.

The whole thing was a gratifying experience and, although we are working through uncertain times, it certainly showed Stansted at its best.

Lucy Wood

PONSONBY - SUBURB OF AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND



Ponsonby Road, Auckland

Recent obituaries to a New Zealand rugby player caught my attention. Andy Haden* had a long career with the 'Ponsonby Rugby Club', a club that takes its name from the inner-city suburb of Auckland, on the North Island of New Zealand.

Today, the suburb of Ponsonby is a predominantly upper-middle-class residential area located along the Ponsonby Road, first recorded on a map in 1850. The suburb is named after the Ponsonby Road which, prior to 1850, was known as Vandeleur Street. Many of the street names of Auckland at this time were derived from senior officers involved in the Napoleonic Wars, namely Wellington and Nelson. The Ponsonby area contained several further examples; Collingwood, Cockburn, Picton, Vandeleur and of course, Ponsonby.

Major General Sir John Vandeleur (1763-1849) and Major General Sir William Ponsonby (1772-1815) were serving officers during the Waterloo Campaign. On the 18th June 1815, Sir William was killed in action. A monument dedicated to his memory stands in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral. Whilst

it is thought unlikely that any member of the Ponsonby or Vandeleur families ever visited New Zealand, it would appear logical to surmise that the source of the Auckland place names were derived from these high ranking military figures.

The Ponsonbys were fortunate not to lose another family member at Waterloo. Sir William's second cousin, Colonel Frederick Cavendish Ponsonby, was seriously wounded with multiple injuries. The following morning, after spending a tortuous night on the battlefield, he was taken to safety in a wagon led by a second Vandeleur present at Waterloo, one Lieutenant John Vandeleur, a nephew of the General. Frederick made a successful recovery from his wounds and from 1826-1835 held the position of Governor of Malta. The Ponsonby/Vandeleur connection was renewed in May 2018 and celebrated with a dinner at the Guards and Calvary Club in Piccadilly, London

There is, in the Blue Drawing Room at Stansted, a fine Hoppner portrait of the young Frederick Ponsonby with his mother, Henrietta, and his elder brother, John, the future 4th Earl of Bessborough.

In 1825 Frederick married Lady Emily Bathurst, the youngest daughter of Henry Bathurst, 3rd Earl Bathurst. Their eldest son, Sir Henry Frederick Ponsonby (1825-1895) served as Queen Victoria's Private Secretary. Henry's second son, Frederick, known as Fritz, was raised to the peerage as 1st Baron Sysonby just before his death in 1935. Loelia Ponsonby, who was the subject of the 'Chichester Observer' article quoted in our last newsletter (and on page 3 of this Newsletter) was his daughter. Her brother, Edward Gaspard, 2nd Lord Sysonby (1903-1956) volunteered for the Commandos during the Second World War and rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was decorated with the DSO in 1940 during the Battle of France and the retreat from Dunkirk. His medal is at Stansted. **Michael Olding**

**Andy Haden made his 'All Black' debut in 1972, and his Test debut against the 'British Lions' in 1977, going on to make 41 Test appearances and scoring two tries. Of those 41 appearances, 8 were as captain of the. To rugby purists he was a controversial figure on and off the field. (Editor)*

ENJOY STANSTED DURING LOCKDOWN



Sweet Chestnuts on the Forest Floor
(Michael Parry)

As we face a second wave of COVID-19 restrictions, which could cause some mental hardships to many of us, we must remember with gratitude the accessibility of Stansted Forest, its sheer beauty and the joy it brings us.

Walking there for exercise, amongst the trees, gives a great sense of tranquillity and well-being. Taking to the open air, alongside nature, helps not only to lift the spirits but also to put current problems into a better perspective.

Parks and open spaces are to remain available to the public and Stansted has paths that are easy to walk down and within good reach of the Main Avenue car park. You may hear birdsong along the way, find some sweet chestnuts, or even be lucky enough come across and disturb a stray deer. So, get out, keep fit and most of all, enjoy yourselves. **Valerie Godwin**

THE GARDEN SHOW



The Volunteers' Gazebo

Oh, what joy it was to have the postponed 'Garden Show' to enjoy during the first weekend of September; a sheer delight after months of struggling to cope with the effects of the COVID-19 virus - and how wonderfully well it was all organised - restrictions in place.

Social distancing was easy out in the fresh air and with such a huge amount of space available to use.

There seemed to be more marquees than usual too, which perfectly solved the problem of crowds under cover. Each marquee had stalls well spaced, up and down each side only, with none at all in the middle. Entry was in one way, sanitisers used, masks on, and exit another.....simple.

The food marquee was the same, so well set out and, in addition, there were many other stalls where one could purchase food or drink; hot dogs, Cornish pasties, ice-creams, stir fries, cakes, cheeses, meats, local beer and cider, local honey and much, much more.

The Friends, Bookshop Volunteers and Garden Volunteers got together to organise the Promotional Gazebo (pictured) and, of course, as well as the many arts, crafts, clothes and other exquisite creations on offer, the show was full of flowers, plants, statues and garden furniture to buy. There were birds of prey to watch, a tiny tots play area, and Dawn Gracie and the usual jazz band provided the music. Visitor numbers were, of course, down, however it was just right in terms of maintaining the required physical distancing and it was within the regulatory number allowed on site each day:-



Raymond Mosley - Stone Carver

Friday - 2,942; Saturday - 3,858; Sunday - 3,706 giving a total of 10,506

A brilliant show. Sincere congratulations to all those involved.

Valerie Godwin (Photographs - Robert Godwin)

Editors Note: Our secretary (Anne Burton) told me that she had received wondrous messages, letters, and emails from visitors who were really glad to get out and about around the Estate. And indeed it seems those that did attend the Garden Show had a great time there which we hope was the same for you, if you attended. We are, however, aware that for some, being there was just not possible.

TEN YEARS ON....



Donkey Statue

In 2010 Tony and I spent our last Christmas in the UK as residents. Having sold up and moved from Hayling Island, we spent the next ten months living in a holiday cottage located at the Donkey Sanctuary close to Sidmouth prior to our departure to Tenerife in January 2011. Like Stansted, we remember it with great fondness, a sentiment I know shared by Michael and dear Sheila Olding following their visits to us. The fact that there was heavy snow cover for 10 days was, for me, the icing on the cake. To enjoy walking the arboretum/memorial pathways surrounding each field with our border collie, Muffin; watch the donkeys being fed hay in the sun and see an unbelievable variety and number of wild birds feeding on our terrace each day. Wonderful memories, although Tony wasn't too pleased when I got the car stuck in a snowdrift!

Tenerife was a whole new experience and one to which we adapted fairly quickly, integrating ourselves as much as possible into the Canarian traditions and lifestyle. I'm happy to say that we've had no regrets over the move but COVID-19 has introduced a new perspective to life as we knew it and perhaps took for granted.

The restrictions during our 10-12 week lockdown were draconian. Under the watchful eyes of armed police, the new laws had to be followed; road blocks prevented movement from one municipality to the next without a valid reason; nobody permitted out of their home except shopping for essential items, medical reasons, visiting a bank or if they had a dog. It was against the law to walk anyone else's dog and only a maximum distance of 100 metres from the home was permitted – not around the home, just from A - B and back. Try telling that to an active dog used to chasing rabbits! I walked across the golf course in the dark each morning wearing dark grey and covering face and hands if the moon was shining! One felt like a criminal – however, there were other like-minded dog owners and we had a network system to report any patrolling police cars! Social distancing was normally 100 metres or more and the pooches were happy but, if caught, one's photograph was taken and if caught a second time, a fine of €600 was imposed. We were the lucky ones to be living in such an open area where children could play in their gardens but for those in city apartments it must have been a nightmare for families, perhaps without gardens or balconies, in the increasing summer heat with no school and unable to walk in parks or by the sea.

80% of the island's economy relies on tourism but, two weeks before lockdown, the Canarian Government closed all holiday complexes and hotels and demanded the repatriation of all visitors to their home countries. By the start of lockdown tourists had left, bars and restaurants were closed, the streets completely empty except for shoppers queuing outside the supermarkets permitted to remain open and only a handful of flights arrived each week bringing in supplies. It was a surreal time for everyone, but it also brought people together; groups of different nationalities helping those who couldn't help themselves; supermarkets setting up food donation areas and people queuing and social distancing with good humour – difficult with the mandatory face mask which still applies to everyone today! One of the greatest pleasures was the silence and pollution-free skies created by the lack of cars and planes. Over the weeks there was an eradication of the virus. Unfortunately, that only lasted while the island isolated itself from the outside world but it's rapidly learning to live with and control its effects and visitors are once again welcome – for now!

So, this Christmas season will certainly be unlike the one we enjoyed in Devon 10 years ago. For the foreseeable future we probably cannot take for granted the ability to hop on a flight back to the UK to see our families, friends and enjoy events at Stansted, nor do we expect them to take any risk in visiting us. However, despite this, we remain very happy and contented with the decision we made to move here and rely on all the modern communication systems to keep us connected.

I do look forward though to the time when I can reacquaint myself with the Estate and some of the many friends I made during my tenure as Newsletter Editor and for which I once again thank and congratulate Robert and Valerie Godwin for providing us all with such newsworthy and colourful editions. But in the meantime, to all those we know at Stansted and the many we don't, Tony and I send our best wishes for a safe and peaceful Christmas and an improving 2021. *Jill Waring*



Arboretum Memorial Walk

SPONSOR A TREE



Michael Prior - Head Forester
Explaining the planting method being
used for new saplings

The Stansted Park Charitable Foundation is offering the chance to restore its forest, planting thousands of trees to recreate woodland cover, offset emissions and create wildlife habitats.

The Foundation has reluctantly begun a major felling programme, under licence from the Forestry Commission because of the Ash dieback disease (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) – most of this species at Stansted Park has some degree of infection and young trees in particular are either dead or dying.

This virulent disease weakens even larger trees, reducing their ability to fight secondary pathogens and making them unstable. This has serious safety implications in areas of public access, or adjacent to roads and buildings. Managing them is fraught with danger, meaning landowners are, with heavy hearts, having to fell large numbers of ash trees.

Ash is one of our most common trees and its widespread loss will have a disastrous effect. The species is vital for biodiversity, with huge numbers of creatures reliant on it for food or habitat. Old trees, with numerous cavities, are homes for birds, bats and a myriad of insects and fungi.

Many superb young trees have to be felled and sold at a fraction of their potential value rather than as fine timber in the future.

WHERE YOU CAN HELP - THE SPONSORSHIP PROJECT

The cost of replanting these large areas is huge but a vital part of Stansted Park's charitable mission. A mix of native hardwoods will optimise biodiversity and the introduction of new species, able to thrive in our changing climate, will add seasonal colour. New access paths will be created to enhance visitors' experience.

The Foundation is hoping individual sponsors will 'buy a tree', perhaps as a present for family members or in memory of a loved one. While it won't be possible to identify your individual tree, you will be able to choose from: English Oak, Norway Maple, Wild Cherry, Italian Alder, Small Leaved Lime, Hornbeam or Wild Service Tree and whether you wish to have them planted at The Sling, Turner's Piece, The Escarpment, or Broad Walk. You will know that you have permanently committed to the restoration of the forest.

For those who would like to contribute to this very important project, the suggested cost of sponsorship is £10 per tree and if you are a tax payer by completing a Gift Aid form the Foundation will be able to claim back tax. - *Lucy Wood*

Please visit the Stansted Park website for a sponsorship form to complete and return to:- Stansted Park Foundation, Stansted Park, Rowlands Castle, Hampshire, PO9 6DX. <https://www.stanstedpark.co.uk/treefundproject> - Editor

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2020



They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the Morning,
We will remember them.



2020 HOUSE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Unfortunately the House and Gardens will remain closed until next season.

DECEMBER - SATURDAY 12th

An evening with Peter Auty

For more information please contact the office on
023 9241 2265 or enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk

Please Support Stansted House

COMMITTEE MEMBER CONTACT POINTS

Chairman:- Michael Olding
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Secretary:- Anne Burton
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Membership Secretary:- Paul Bennett
friendsofstanstedpark@outlook.com

Newsletter:- Robert Godwin crana.crana@ntlworld.com

NEXT FOSP NEWSLETTER COPY DATE

Friday 29th January 2021 - *Articles would be welcome*

CONTACTING STANSTED HOUSE

(Please Note That The House Is Closed At This Present Time)

For a general enquiry, or for information about FOSP membership, visits and social 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 Fax: 023 9241 3773

Email: enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk

BOOKSHOP

We are sorry to learn of the closure of the Foundation's Bookshop in the Garden Centre, yet again, due to the Government's new Lockdown regulations – just when we needed to stock up on books for the long winter evenings!

Unfortunately, your Gifted Books cannot be accepted during this closure either, but it is hoped the Bookshop will be able to re-open once more at the beginning of December. *Editor*

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER FOR THE YEAR STARTING JANUARY 2021

FRIENDS - YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED NOW MORE THAN EVER: It is the time of year to be thinking about Membership Renewal. Many of you do this through a Standing Order, in which case no action is required, but for those of you paying annually we do urge you to renew your membership, either direct to the Friends' bank account or by cheque. All details are below and, if you have any queries, please contact the Membership Secretary, Paul Bennett, on friendsofstanstedpark@outlook.com

Stansted Park Foundation is a charitable organisation with no Government Funding, and is very grateful for the generous fundraising achieved by the Friends over the years.

The Committee and Foundation have been working hard to find ways to resume a programme of events, which is difficult with so many unknowns. It is hoped that there will be a full programme in 2021 and that the Mansion will again be open to visitors. Details will be circulated as soon as they are definite. Please support these when you can. We also hope that you continue to enjoy the Newsletter, whether online or by post. Please reassure your family and friends that new Members are very welcome. Thank you for your continued support.

PAYMENT DETAILS: Friends of Stansted Park - A/c No 61788627 Sort Code 60-10-20 Reference: **YourName** Post Code: **XXX XXX** or Cheque payable to Friends of Stansted Park (Double £25; Single £15; Family £30) to the Estate Office, address above.

The following are some of the mask 'Lockdown' poems submitted by FOSP Book Group Members. They are to be congratulated for their imaginative account of how masks have impacted on our lives. *Editor*

MASKS

A mask, may I ask? What a task!
To protect, don't forget – I'm all set.

Got a white one, a blue and a black,
And disposable too, I'm on track.
Can't see for the steam (not so keen).
But wear it I must, Boris says, so I trust
His advisors' considered wise words.

A mask makes you deaf, now did you know that?
It's not "seeing" the words – it's a fact.
Plus, it make me look daft, those I know walk straight past.
And apart from all that, I'm feeling quite flat
That I can't hug my friends, only chat.

ODE TO THE FACE MASK

So now we have to wear a mask,
A trip to the shops becomes an onerous task,
Which mask to choose, as I have quite a few
You have to be fashionable- what's a girl to do?
I have pretty ones, stripy ones and medical ones too
It has to match my outfit - what a to do!
But joking apart there's a serious side to covering your face
It's just another measure to keep us safe.

TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK

I really think you should not ask
Someone like me to wear a mask.
It is not often I complain,
So I think I shall explain.

I feel it is not really fair
My glasses steam up with hot air,
It means that I cannot see
This is not how living ought to be.

My life no longer is fantastic
For behind my ears there is elastic
It tangles up with aids I wear
As a result I cannot hear.

Advancing age and forgetful mind
The mask I need I cannot find.
To go out I'd like to pop
But it means I cannot shop.

Did you say it may be wiser
If I bought myself a visor?
I reply you should not ask
A girl like me to wear a mask.