



SANDGATE CONSERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



WINTER WONDERLAND IN SULLINGTON

Fun for some in the December heavy snow

(photo by Brian Burns)

Spring 2011

NO.72

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER– February

I was very sorry to have to tell everyone that the Christmas Social was cancelled once again in January. The Committee had worked very hard and everything was ready. Unfortunately the bandleader had been taken very seriously ill and was unable to attend.

However, we asked a replacement speaker, Barry Miles, if he could come along at very short notice and he gave an excellent talk on the “Pro’s and Con’s” of Conservation to a well attended audience. It was very well received.

The main thing that we have taken over this year is the supervising of the work parties of Sandgate Park from Horsham District Council. They have fully co-operated with this change and have sent a letter with the necessary information on Insurance and Health & Safety etc..

Details of the Work Parties are displayed at the gate in Sandgate Lane.

If you have never helped out at a Work Party on a Saturday morning, do please give it a try. It takes place every 3rd. Saturday of the month and is only for 2 hours. It also includes refreshments.

You will all be made very welcome.

We have a very full and interesting programme planned for you for the coming year with a wide range of subjects. By popular request we have managed to find a someone to speak about Hedgehogs!

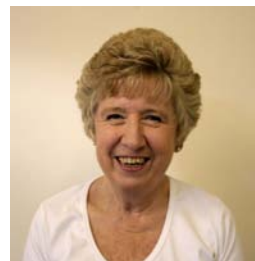
We will be joining the Storrington Conservation Society on Saturday 2nd. July on an outing to the Wey and Arun Canal.

Betty’s Barbeque will be held on Saturday August 13th, when we hope that the band will be in good health to play for you.

All these activities are printed on the new programme card distributed with this Newsletter.

Please try and support these events. I know that you will enjoy them.

Audrey Algar



A Big “Thank You” from The Sandgate Conservation Society To Anne, Tony and Mareline

*Whether the weather be fine, or whether the weather be not.
Whether the weather be cold, or whether the weather be hot.
We'll weather the weather, whatever the weather, whether we like it or not.*

Anne and Tony arrived in our area 10yrs. ago and were soon enrolled as members of the Society. It was not long before they took on the post of Weather Recorders in the Sandgate Newsletter. During this time a degree of metrification was included so that we now have Metric as well as the Imperial concept of measurement recorded.



At all times the report was meticulously presented and had excellent supporting comments to the records. But time has come for them to call it a day. We wish to thank them both, on behalf of the committee and members of the Sandgate Conservation Society, for all their hard work in the past.

They will be a hard act to follow so will anyone interested in replacing their Weather Report please get in touch with Audrey Algar, ASAP!

Mareline Smith has served on the Society Committee for 15yrs, along with regular attendance at Field Days. However, it is the unseen work where she has always supported the Society, in particular as a long term Trustee where she played a part in the Programme Sub Committee.

Our Trustee meetings are proceeded with refreshments and Mareline could always be relied upon to help out there, as well as at the Talks, where she could invariably be found working in the Kitchen.

The Society owes a big “Thank You” to Mareline and we look forward to many years shared with her in her new role as a non-Trustee member.

Geoffrey Moore



National Trust Conservation Report *from Vic Oliver*

Holes dug into the ground? Mowing heather? Why?

Over the years, I am sure you have noticed that we have changed the appearance of the heather on Sullington Warren. Areas have been cut, loaded onto trailers and taken away and we have cut bits here and there, leaving it looking untidy. Also you may have seen holes dug into the heather and wondered why we do not leave it alone. In the picture below, South Downs National Trust volunteers are cutting heather and loading it into the trailer.



***Sullington Warren February 2004
South Downs National Trust Volunteers collecting heather***

Sullington is a small area of isolated heathland which has lost some of the natural processes that you will find on the larger Sussex Heaths such as Stedham, Iping and Woolbeding Commons. Some of these have grazing animals, whilst at others we are looking to introduce grazing animals back onto the commons. Land owners have been encouraged to work together to create links between isolated islands of remnant heaths and are beginning to manage our lost heaths. In an ever-changing world, where animals are kept in buildings more and more, it is good that you can see our old rare breeds of sheep, cattle and pigs on the common as they used to be. Animals are able to manage and maintain our commons and heaths in good healthy condition as they are able to graze all year round.

On Sullington we are reliant on the goodwill of our supporters and volunteers to manage and maintain the warren. Our problem is that much of the heather on the warren is old and becoming older. We mow the heather to change the age structure of the heather across the warren. We cut small areas here and there and over the years we cut some of the same area again. Along the sinuous margin between the mown area and the old heather common, lizards, adders, spiders and beetles use the opportunities offered by the change to their advantage; sunning themselves ready to dart back to safety. All the cuttings are removed so that the mown area can regenerate (heather needs sunlight to grow). The cut area will take up to 4 years to regenerate from the cut stems and from seeds in the ground; these will generate new young plants that will replace the older heather. We always try to use the heather cuttings, as on the warren or at Warren Hill, to expand the existing areas of heather and to areas where we have removed large trees.

Another way of regenerating heathland is by cutting turf from within an area of heather to create what we call an invertebrate scrape. The idea is that we take off the top layers of growth, exposing the bare soils underneath which will expose heather seeds that have been on the ground and have not germinated. This will give us new heather plants. One advantage of this work is that boring wasps, bees and beetles are able to enjoy undisturbed areas of the warren where they can lay their eggs. Over several years the scrape will disappear as the new heather grows into mature plants and covers the ground. The heather turf that has been removed has been transplanted into Great Broom Field at Warren Hill. We also cut turf from the grassy strip at the sides of paths to improve the heather and to remove the vigorous grass growth. We use this turf to repair eroded paths on the warren.



Sullington Warren April 2006 South Downs National Trust Volunteers cutting turf

Bowl Barrows and trees

We have been asked by English Heritage to remove 8 large Scots pine trees from 2 Bronze Age Bowl Barrows, (scheduled monument) SM27086 and SM27090, because they are damaging these monuments. Work on SM27086 behind the Methodist Church has finished. Sandgate Volunteers helped me to carry out the lop & top and to burn the branches. One of the pines had been damaged by the snow. I was able to take 8 lengths of 8.5m (21ft) timber to Amberley working museum. This winter/spring we will be working on the other barrow SM27090 which is behind Palmer Close. To do this we will mow an area of heather and remove from site and then fell up to 13 trees on the boundary. I saw the damage that tree roots can do to soil structure when Southern Water laid a new water main from Hardham works to the reservoir on Highdown Hill. That required an archaeological watching brief as part of installing the water main. This exposed various ditches cut through the chalk and Iron Age plough marks across the surface of the chalk. There was a circular depression where a tree had grown. All the surface chalk in it was broken and fragmented. By removing the trees we will reduce the damage that the roots will do to any remains and the structure of the barrow.

Hedge Lying

It is time to lay the hedge we planted on East Clayton Farm in 2005. It is along the boundary of Home Field and the A283 Storrington Road. Volunteers will help me start the work of lying and staking the hedge on Sunday 13 February and I hope to finish the task that week, weather permitting. By laying the hedge we will produce new growth from the cut stump and the laid stem will produce more branches. We will weave the stems together and stake them in place and at the same time we will trim the hedge with the end result being a stock-proof hedge. **Vic**

SANDGATE & SULLINGTON IN THE SNOW

Pictures by Brian Burns



**Two Wintry
Scenes of
Sullington
Warren**



**No Resting
on the
Bench!**



**Brian's
Beautiful
Snowy
Vistas**



The Fairy Bridge

Care and Reclamation

Sullington Warren & Warren Hill

Our new season started in September with a warm but damp day. As a result of our dry summer there was little grass on the Green so no need to cut it. Instead Vic got us clearing and burning the gorse growing on the north west corner of the Green. We had 11 volunteers and made good progress removing all the gorse in this area back to the trees. We all enjoyed our morning coffee and cake followed by a glass of beer or lemonade at the end. An enjoyable morning.

A warm and pleasant October morning encouraged only 7 volunteers to report for duty to help on the warren. Our task was to protect the bronze age barrow behind the Methodist Church by removing the trees growing on this ancient site. Using his chainsaw Vic felled the 4 large pine trees and trimmed off the branches. Vic takes the tree trunks to Amberely Museum for use in their saw mill. We collected all the lop and top branches and loaded them onto a bonfire to dispose of them. It was warm work and we all enjoyed our morning coffee and cake at 11am followed by a refreshing glass of beer or shandy on completion. A useful job done that will be appreciated by English Heritage.

Another pleasant autumn morning in November when we met on Windmill Hill above the Water Lane car park. The paths across the top of the hill had become overgrown with gorse that obstructed the access and smothered the heather. Vic had started the bonfire before we arrived. Our team of 15 volunteers using long clippers made a good clearance of the gorse on one side of the path. We cut the gorse down to ground level and loaded the cuttings onto the fire. It will regrow but take a few years before needing another cut back. There was still a lot of clearance needed and following our contribution Vic has thoroughly cleared the area including the heather that should regrow.

In December we met at the foot of the 39 steps to clear some of the trees at the base of the opposite burial mound. There were 11 of us on parade and we set to with saws and long handled clippers to remove mostly birch trees. These trees were lopped and trunks sawn to feed the bonfire. On completion the view of the mound and the heather heath from the steps is much improved.

A mild day for January encouraged 13 volunteers to help weed the young trees in the wet heath area approaching Water Lane. It is always surprising how many pine, birch and oak trees take root since we last performed this task. The ground being so wet made it easy to pull up the smaller saplings. We loaded all that we gathered onto a bonfire and left the heathland a little more pristine than when we started. This is an important part of Sullington Warren being a wet heathland habitat that has become quite rare.

It is always a pleasure to meet at 10am on the second Saturday of the month to help maintain the National Trust open spaces. The programme is included in this newsletter. We look forward to seeing you if you can find the time to join us.

Tony Wyard

Planning on our Patch by Bill Cutting

Perhaps it's the time of year, but then maybe it's the economy, but as far as Planning and Sandgate Conservation Society is concerned not much is happening. You may recall that my note in the last Newsletter explained the importance of the area around the junction of Hampers Lane and the A283, in the efforts of the Association to further the formation of the Sandgate Country Park. I thought it might be useful to explain what is meant when we talk about the Sandgate Country Park.

The Sandgate area is all that is left of the old Sandgate House and its associated park land and farmland. In its heyday, the land holding was over 4000 acres stretching from Summers Place Billingshurst to Findon. Sandgate House was built in 1868 and had later alterations and additions. Gradually the land-holding reduced. During the First World War many acres of Scots Pines were felled to produce pit props for the trenches and in the Second World War the house was requisitioned for billeting Canadian soldiers. After the war, the house was bought by Hall & Co, for the sand. Now all that is left are some small buildings where the Cemex offices are in Water Lane and you can see some large wrought iron gates at the corner of Water Lane and the A283.

What we have today are two sandpits, some woodland (Sandgate Park), open fields and the National Trust areas of Sullington Warren, Warren Hill and Washington Common. Many years ago, the Society, together with Horsham District Council, developed the idea of using these areas to form Sandgate Country Park, an area where people could have access for recreation and walking. It was recognised from the start that the sand pits would be active for many years, but it would be possible to take advantage of any changes in land use or ownership to forward the idea, before sandwinning ceased in the quarries.

We did not think it necessary to own all of the land, indeed National Trust property is inviolate and virtually impossible for them to sell. However, we did see the possibility of creating the Country Park, with the cooperation of the various landowners and the concept is included within the Horsham District Policy as AL20.

The recent sale of Hanson's Pit at the west side of the junction of Hampers Lane and the A283 is an example of the sort of opportunity mentioned above. Unfortunately we had no prior notice that the sale was about to take place and therefore, although the Trustees of the Society discussed possibilities, there was no time to organize a 'community purchase'.

Society President, Don Filliston, will tell you that this area, the old Marley Field and Hanson's Pit are crucial to the formation of the Country Park; essential for access from Sullington Warren and Sandgate Woods into Warren Hill and Washington Common. We understand from the Agents that the quarry has been sold and we are now trying to establish the names of the new owners so that we can meet them and explain how the Hanson Quarry fits into the overall picture. If anyone has the answer to this question of ownership, we would be pleased to hear from you. The Society will continue to work with Horsham District Council towards the formation of the Sandgate Country Park.

If you are interested in knowing more about the Sandgate area and the Sandgate Estate, I thoroughly recommend Joan Ham's very readable book, 'Sullington – Domesday to D-Day', the source of much of my information. Also Joan's other book on local history, 'Storrington in Living Memory', does include some detail about Sandgate. Together these books are a must for anyone wanting to know about the history of our area.

“At present the proposed Country Park represents some 107 hectares of new publicly accessible open space for Storrington, Sullington and Washington.”

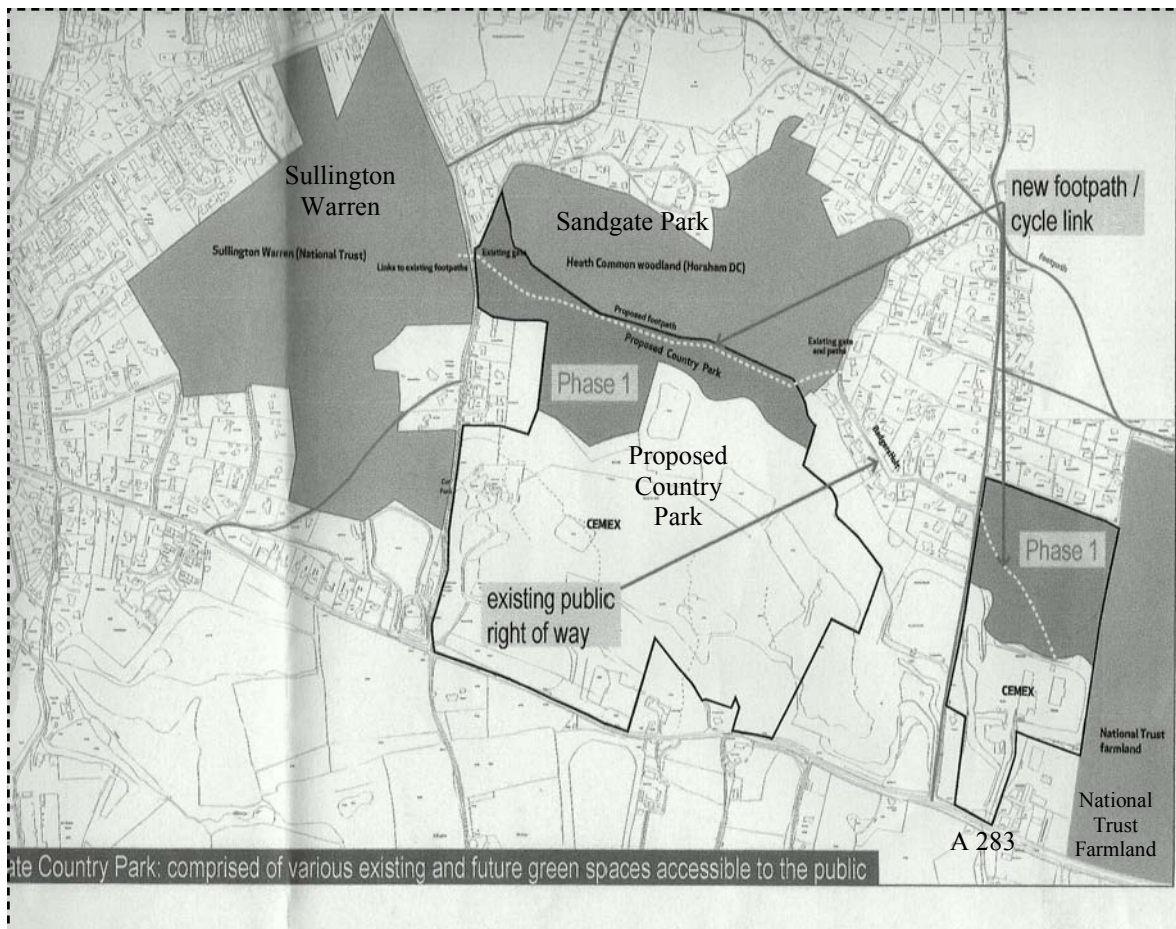
Phase 1 comprises of around 10 hectares at the Washington workshops site of Cemex and the northern fringe of Sandgate Quarry.

Phase 1 is to be delivered when development commences at the Washington workshops.

Phase 1 forms an integral part of the overall future Country Park, as described by the Land Use Consultants (July 2010).

Cemex remaining contribution to the Country Park is around 30 hectares.”

Quotes from the amended draft proposals by Cemex.



You can view the overall Planning and Building Development Application submitted by Cemex on the Horsham District Council Website:-

<http://public-access.horsham.gov.uk/public-access/>

The number of the application is DC/10/1457

Ed.

*WEST SUSSEX COUNTY
COUNCIL UPDATE
FROM FRANK WILKINSON*

Well, folks, what shall I write about this time – you must by now be fed up with my writings about waste! So, I have come up with the idea of explaining the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

Boring you may say but TRO's are the cause/cure of the many complaints I receive.

Traffic Regulation Orders cover road closures, yellow lines, speed limits, parking restrictions – in fact anything that is associated with our roads and streets. One example is speed limit change. The general belief is that to change the speed limit all that needs to be done is to change the sign from 50/40mph to 30mph. Oh, if only it was that simple but the law requires a painful process to be finitely followed and this applies to all highway changes.

Once it has been agreed to change a speed limit, the change has to be tested against the Department of Transport criteria – this would need a two page interpretation on its own so I will skip that bit. If the scheme passes that test a design is drawn up by the County Highways team and it then has to go out to public consultation – i.e. notices to Parish Councils, copies in Libraries etc. plus the Local County Committee. This Committee is made up of the four County Councillors in the area who meet four times a year, in public, to consider not just TRO's but also local grants, police and community matters and above all to listen to you, the residents and tax payers.

The comments received back from the public/residents, bus companies, police, fire, ambulance services etc. are published with counter comments by the Highways Officers. It then goes back to the County Local Committee who, at a Public Meeting, consider both the objections and the support for the Order and if on balance the order is in the public interest it has again to go out as a public announcement and if there is no come-back from that it is then given the final go-ahead.

All of this, of course, costs money, on average £4000-£5000 and unfortunately there is no way around it. To cap this, each County Local Committee (in our case Chanctonbury which stretches from Amberley and Pulborough to Cowfold, Steyning etc.) is budgeted to allow for four TRO's a year.

You will see therefore that it is not just a simple case of changing signs!!

Frank Wilkinson
County Councillor
Storrington Division

MP registers formal objection to quarry in National Park

Arundel & South Downs MP Nick Herbert has registered his formal objection to the Barlavington Estate's application to quarry sand on Horncroft Common in the new South Downs National Park.

In a letter to West Sussex County Council Mr. Herbert writes that, as well as expressing his own opinion, he felt a duty to "draw attention to the many letters I have received from constituents in the many villages affected, and their parish councils, that I represent and that are firmly opposed to the Barlavington Estate's plans."

It has also emerged that Jim Redwood, Head of Planning at the South Downs National Park Authority, has recommended to the newly formed SDNPA Planning Committee that it should object to the plans.

The scheme's promoters have submitted the application to the County Council ahead of 1 April when the Park Authority will assume responsibility for planning decisions.

Mr. Herbert says that it would be "surprising" if the Park Authority did not follow this advice and object to the application, and that "it would be quite wrong for the County Council to grant permission for the quarry just weeks ahead of the transfer of responsibility for such decisions to the Park Authority when it is likely that they would object."

The proposal for the development is to create the facilities, plant and quarry required to extract 1.5 million tonnes of sand over the next 20 years.

Local people fear that the development will not only damage an area located within the South Downs National Park, but would increase noise and traffic. It is believed that there would be up to 100 vehicle movements a day from the site, most of them heavy lorries.

Last month, Nick Herbert handed over a petition - signed by over 640 parishioners and visitors - to the County Council against the proposed quarry. Mr Herbert commented: "There is a strong case against this quarry and now we know that the National Park's planning officers are recommending that the application is turned down. I hope that West Sussex County Council will note this and reject the proposal

SAM WILSON

Parliamentary Researcher to Rt. Hon Nick Herbert MP

MP for Arundel & South Downs

& Minister of State for Policing and Criminal Justice

House of Commons

LONDON

SW1A 0AA

Poetry

Our Heathland Heritage.

Our prehistoric landscape was broken woodland cover,
 With heath and grassy areas, vying with each other.
 In feudal times, villagers, worked both the heath and field,
 Then when land went to private owners, men were made to yield.
 Marginalized, to eke out a living on the heath,
 While in the fields, agriculture degrades the soil beneath,
 Leaving abandoned wasteland, for heather to move in,
 Spreading the growth of *Calluna Vulgaris* - or 'Ling'.
 Ling turves were used for fuel, for roofs and walls were sold
 And covering stacked root clamps, kept out the winter cold.
 Cutting of ling turves in 1567 became law;
 Known as 'The Right of Turbary', aimed to protect the poor.
 It lasted from these feudal times and achieved it's goal,
 Until the coming of the railways, bringing cheap coal.
 The short, young, twiggy growth was ideal for slow burn fuel,
 With mats of fibrous roots to bind - a perfect little jewel.
 This was helped by grazing, while to make the balanced match,
 The taller material was ideal for brooms and thatch.
 Turves were cut in summer and turned over to dry well,
 Then carted home to burn on fires, with a few to sell.
 Some ling was saved for livestock, as a vital winter feed;
 A judgement for Manorial Courts, to balance local need.
 The turves were cut in staggered rows, every third turf taken.
 This stopped erosion, then in seven years, the patches reawaken.
 A limiting factor in this slow cycle for the land,
 Explains why the little heath communities did not expand.
 To let pasture grow for hay, heath was grazed in May, June.
 Cattle weren't keen on ling, but Swaledale sheep found it a boon.
 Burning of the old dead heath, promotes new growth in spring,
 But only every twenty years, for best results to bring,
 Because minerals are lost, though replaced in a few years,
 But phosphorus takes twenty, so the need for time appears.
 So, for four thousand years, our heathlands have been giving
 An amazing history, where peasants struggled for a living.
 There's a network of sound plans in place, to save our heaths,
 From Natural England to the National Lottery bequeaths.
 To secure the future, needs the will to find the way
 And public attitudes and values, have a very big say.
 Oh, to see the sun rise again, in appreciation,
 On wondrous native heathland, for the next generation.

Don Filliston.

The Lost Wey to the Sea

Wednesday 22nd September 2010



Tony Pratt came along and gave us a very varied and interesting update on the history and restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal. He used a range of still and moving pictures from several sources to illustrate the story.

He linked the historical side to the opening of Portsmouth on a Tall Ships day, showing the parallels with the fortunes of the canal. Both have moved from commercial operations to leisure as their focus.

Starting from the coast he followed the route that the canal formed part of, using old postcards to compare with present appearance. When it was built between 1813-16 the purpose of the Wey and Arun was to provide an alternative to the sea journey around the coast, where French Privateers were attacking large numbers of our small ships, even after Nelson's victory at Trafalgar. The war was over before the canal was complete so it struggled to survive, finally closing in 1871.

P.A.L. Vine's book about the canal, "London's Lost Route to the Sea" published in 1968, raised awareness and encouraged the formation of a restoration society in 1970. This became a Trust in 1972 and there are now close to 3,000 members. There are many active work parties on restoration tasks and some 80 members operating the boat trips on the working section at Loxwood by the Onslow Arms. Millions of pounds have been raised and works such as taking the canal under the High Street at Loxwood, have been completed.

The final part of the talk told the story behind the 2002 documentary about a journey from the "Thames to the Solent" made in 1867 by a Victorian yachtsman J.B. Dashwood. The Trust has reprinted the book as it is the only known written record of the canal in use.

There are opportunities for the public to visit and travel on the restored section of the canal at Loxwood and the usual "Easter Bunny" trips will be operated as usual. Regular trips restart from April 2011. Details of these and lots of other information are on the website www.weyandarun.co.uk.

STOP PRESS:

Don't forget Saturday July 2nd. A joint outing with the Storrington Conservation Society to the Wey and Arun canal.



Bignor Roman Villa

Wednesday 27th October 2010

In October once the EGM business had been concluded we were treated to a lively talk about the Roman Villa at Bignor by Lisa Hayes and Karen Towns. We learnt that the remains of the Villa were found by George Tupper whilst he was ploughing his fields in 1811. The Villa and the beautiful mosaics are still owned by the Tupper family who have farmed the land at Bignor since 1066.

It is thought that the Villa was first built as a country home with surrounding farm land. However, it grew over time to a complex of more than 60 rooms. The favourable site had a plentiful water supply and was close to Stane Street which was a major thoroughfare in Roman times.

Today the most exciting remains of the Villa are the mosaics and we were shown pictures of the most impressive, including a dolphin with 8 legs. It is thought that this mistake was probably due to the creator never having seen a real dolphin!



Lisa and Karen passed around more pictures of the Villa and let us handle, roof and floor tiles, although they did admit that some of their most precious pieces were now on display at the British Museum. They described the Roman heating system which not only heated the main Villa but also extended to the bath house.

It was a most interesting talk and many members expressed a wish to either visit the site or make a return visit. The opening times of the Villa are:-

1st March to 31st October 7 days a week

March – May	10am – 5pm
June – August	10am – 6pm
September – October	10am – 5pm

Susie Jerman

Arundel Wildlife and Wetland Centre Wednesday 24th November 2010

Paul Stevens started his talk by telling us of his background and how, even as a 1-year old, he was interested in wild life. After being a postman, kitchen fitter, etc. etc. he finally found his dream job with the Wetlands Centre and was so enthusiastic about what he was doing there.

The Centre in Arundel is one of nine run by the WWT which is an international wetland conservation charity in the UK, founded by Sir Peter Scott.

It has 26 hectares of naturalised landscapes and wetland habitats, home of kingfishers, water voles and hundreds of wildfowl. It was originally watercress beds.

There is a tranquil area of ponds and reeds where a rich variety of British wildlife can be observed living free and naturally, including dragonflies, glow-worms, grass snakes, kingfishers, warblers, water shrews and voles. The attraction for these creatures is the exceptional cleanliness of the water in the reed bed.



This reed bed needs careful management. If left uncut it turns to scrub very quickly, making it difficult for harvest mice or birds like the reed warbler to find a nesting site. However, if cut too often it threatens protected invertebrates such as reed moths, who only emerge as adults after up to 4 years of tunnelling inside a reed stem. Therefore a balance is struck and the reed bed is cleared and cut to a rotation pattern in order to help protect the widest range of wildlife.

Other conservation work includes controlling tree growth to give unhindered flight-lines for birds, providing predator-proof roosting sites and basking stones for grass snakes.

At the end of the talk there were many questions from an enthusiastic audience. Useful tips were given such as cleaning bird feeders regularly as they can be a source of infection to birds.



On approaching Arundel by road visitors should follow the Brown Duck signs down Mill Road beside the Castle. There is free parking at the centre.

A selection of hot and cold food and drinks can be enjoyed in the Water's Edge Café, overlooking Swan Lake.

Well worth a visit!

Pat Beard



A SHEPHERD'S SUPPER

Ken Guiver

First of all in this Newsletter, may I put in a disclaimer! Brian Burns wrote the article attributed to me last time. I had suggested that he wrote an item based on some of his archived photographs over the years. He did one on the White Mill which burned down in 1911 and it went in under my name. I am sure members would agree that his efforts proved that his literary skills ought to be more widely known and that he ought to be writing more articles for us. After all, we have 35 years of practical conservation work behind us, which must be of interest to new members.

Looking back over that time in old Newsletters there are evident recurring themes of our tasks since February 1975. I suppose it is inevitable to some extent, with some areas of land that we have to deal with locally. There will always be pine and birch seedlings together with bramble and bracken to clear if we are to maintain open heathland with heather. There will also always be erosion of the sand after rain following dry winter periods which will need repair.

At one time we carried out a regular weekend census of the numbers of people using Sullington Warren. We wanted to encourage more people to take advantage of such a superb area for recreation but it would be at the cost of paths, gulleys and steps requiring remedial works, which in some cases such as the Round Seat and the 39 Steps, were major tasks. I am sure that if we carried out head-counts of users nowadays we would find higher numbers than 20-30 years ago.

As far as pine and birch seedlings are concerned, they will always germinate and grow well on sandy soils. Dick Field, in his Newsletter report of Spring 1976, noted that one of the pines cut down was thirty feet high, had a base of 12 inches diameter and was only 22 years old! Near the pine he pulled up 43 pine seedlings without moving a step!

Back in those days members used to bring their own tools along for the work. The Society has now grown to be able to supply all the tools that are required. Functions were organised to raise funds and the Spring 1976 Newsletter advertises a forthcoming "Shepherd's Supper" in March with country style dancing including an exhibition by the Regency Dancers from Worthing. Tickets were to be available at a cost of 75 pence each from Lois Puttick.

Another job we must always anticipate is that of keeping the sites reasonably tidy. On a number of times over the years there has been the need for clearance after natural events, such as the storm of October 1987 and last year's unusual snow accumulation when so many tree branches were broken. Once upon a time the National Trust employed a part-time warden, Mr Lidbetter, to clear rubbish but even then some Saturdays had to be spent by members dealing with it. The November 1976 task was linked with the "Keep Sussex Tidy" campaign and we "wombed" in the pouring rain, finishing up by filling one skip and six large polythene bags with rubbish ranging from lorry mudguards to old prams and two bicycles plus a kitchen pedal bin and lots of old and not so old clothes. Thank goodness that our present day emphasis on recycling (plus potential "fly tipping" fines) stop us having so many eyesores around now.

Weather Watch from Anne and Tony

Year of snow. Crops will grow

July

This month carried on like June and was warm and very dry. We may have been in for a hosepipe ban if this had carried on. The lowest pressure in the month was when it rained the hardest. Saint Swithin did not keep his promise this year.

August

At the beginning of the month it was not quite as warm as it had been previously and on the 10th it rained! A mixed month of two halves, when it rained, it rained heavily and certainly made up for the earlier dry months. We recorded the highest pressure that we had seen recently.

September

The highest day-time temperatures came in three sessions during the month reasonably well spaced out. It was not a wet month and I personally consider September to be one of the most pleasant months of the year and I was not disappointed this year.

October

Because the rain was concentrated into two distinct sections of the month, we did not realise that we had recorded 197% of the 30 year average. The beginning of the month was the warmest, with the second half the coldest. We recorded the first night-time temperatures below zero, since the previous winter

November

It was interesting watching the T.V. weather coverage as numerous weather fronts crossed our region. On the 11th the winds were quite strong for most of the day. By the half way stage of the month we had over the amount of rain usually estimated for the whole month. On the last day we had our first fall of snow, as had the rest of the country.

December

Even although winter is supposed to start on December 1st, we had a starter at the end of November. The snow had disappeared by Saturday morning after a big thaw on the night of the 4th. We had a short break and then more snow falling, making the side roads very slippery. The thaw came on the 21st but not enough to make much difference. The winter solstice and a partial eclipse of the moon combining before Christmas was a little different from usual. December has been the coldest for 120 years. The snow with the ice made travelling difficult. The end of the month ended traditionally "dank".

	July	August	Sept.	October	Nov.	Dec.
Rainfall (Millimetres)	25.45	132.65	64.75	126.6	105.5	46.75
Rainfall (Inches)	1.00	5.22	2.55	4.98	4.15	1.84
Max Temp (Degrees C)	29.0	23.5	21.0	19.0	15.0	9.0
Min Temp (Degrees C)	10.0	7.0	4.0	-1.0	-5.0	-8.5
Max Temp (Degrees F)	84.2	74.3	69.8	66.2	59.0	48.2
Min Temp (Degrees F)	50.0	44.6	39.2	30.2	23.0	16.7
Max Pressure (Millibars)	1025	1024	1026	1027	1020	1036
Min Pressure (Millibars)	1005	994	998	992	963	987
Max Pressure (Inches Hg)	30.27	30.24	30.30	30.33	30.12	30.59
Min Pressure (Inches Hg)	29.68	29.35	29.47	29.29	28.44	29.15

A total of 501.70mm (19.74 inches) of rain fell in the second half of 2009, which is 97.85% of the equivalent average rainfall for the previous 30 years. The total rainfall for 2010 was 876.60mm (34.51 inches), which is 120.45% of the average for the previous 30 years.

Although this is the last weather report that we will be producing, compilation charts for 2002 onwards will still be available on Tony and Anne's Amateur Radio web-site, <http://homepages.tesco.net/~a.wadsworth>

EDITORIAL

From Hamlets to Urbanisation

As we all know Storrington and Sullington were once two totally separate rural hamlets, nestling in the lee of the South Downs. Each had a different identity and individual communities. How things have changed!



I was strongly reminded of the vast changes on a recent trip to India. The contrast from the first time I visited the country, some twenty years ago, is quite remarkable.

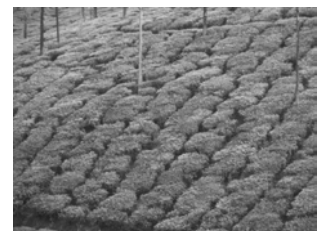


In 1990 India had a series of large, run down ex-Imperial cities and a huge rural population in small villages. The lure of the city had led to enormous contrasts, with shanty towns encamped right up to the walls of the armed guarded 5 star hotels. The divide from poverty in both city and countryside to abject opulence and wealth of the few was there for all to see.



Yes, there are still the shanties, begging, poverty and deprivation alongside wealth but things have changed dramatically in those 20 odd years, some good, some bad. There is now a burgeoning middle class of entrepreneurs and hi-tech workers. Cities like Delhi have a modern underground transit system and have grown multi-storey glass and metal commercial structures. However, as cities have modernised, so the drift from land to urban centres has grown and all around these conurbations good agricultural land has gone under construction for business and accommodation. A once small city like Madras (Chennai) now sprawls south down what is known as “The Hi-Tech Highway” towards the tip of India.

At the same time swathes of broad leaf forest are making way for increasing acres of Tea (as in picture), Coffee and Rubber in vast plantations.



India is still “incredible” and well worth a visit!

Storrington and Sullington may not be on the same scale as India but they are now one Parish Council, the merging lines of the two villages are disappearing fast into a blurred vagueness of urban, town like infrastructure. Every day it seems multidevelopments are planned to reduce the green areas around us.

This is why the conservation of areas like Sandgate Park and Sullington Warren is so important.

Richard Jerman

SANDGATE PARK
FIELD DAY DATES FOR
YOUR DIARY

Would you like to come out and help look after Sandgate Park?

Our conservation volunteer group will be meeting on the following dates to carry out invaluable work around the site to improve habitats and conserve wildlife:-

Saturday March 26th

Saturday April 23rd

Saturday May 28th

Saturday June 25th

Saturday September 24th

Look out for posters on site for future tasks. This year we are thinking about trying out some weekday tasks as it could give us the opportunity to tackle some larger Projects.

Typically we will be clearing paths, invasive rhododendron and bamboo as well as pulling out the new birch seedlings.

We will also have to continue the work of clearing around the specimen Scots pine to give them growing space.

Vic Oliver
of The National Trust

Work Plans

We meet every second Saturday in the month on Sullington Warren or Warren Hill at 10.00am. I bring the tools and gloves, you bring the energy to help manage the Warrens and have fun. We had a very good turn out for the working days last year and achieved a lot of good work. Tea & coffee at 11.00am

March 12th – Thinning the wood around the windmill shaft. We will fell the trees and cut them into cordwood lengths. The lop & top will be loaded onto a fire and burnt.

Meet at the top of windmill hill, at the shaft

April 9th – Cutting back gorse growing over paths around the main Bronze Age Bowl Barrow, loading it onto a trailer and removing from the site.

Meet on the green

May 14th – Turf cutting and path restoration. We will cut turf from the side of paths, load onto a trailer and use the turfs to repair eroded paths.

Meet on the green

June 11th – Removing small trees from the open heath, loading onto a trailer and removing from the site.

Meet on windmill hill, above the car park

September 10th – Mowing half of the green. If there is no grass to mow, we will mow some heather. All cuttings will be loaded onto a trailer and removed from the site.

Meet on the green

Social Activities

Talks and Visits - 2011/2

Once again our Programme Sub-Committee have organized a great variety of interesting events. The talks take place in Sullington Parish Hall and start at 7.30pm

2011

Wednesday 23rd March

RETURN TO THE RECORD OFFICE

After the films of yesteryear last time, Alan Redman returns by "popular demand" with more insight into history.

Wednesday 27th April

AGM followed by an entertaining and interesting talk.

Saturday 2nd July

OUTING – CANAL TRIP

A joint trip with the Storrington Conservation Society on the Wey and Arun Canal.

Saturday 13th August

BETTY'S BARBEQUE

We always have such a good time at our annual BBQ held in Betty Bazire's woodland garden at "Little Coppice" in Sandgate Lane. Bring along your own food, drinks and chairs—we provide the barbeques, bonfire and music! Start time 7.30pm.



Wednesday 14th September

WISTON HOUSE

Janet Pennington and her stories about the House (with some ghostly aspects..)



Wednesday 26th October

ALL ABOUT HEDGEHOGS

Tales of our spiky friends from Emma Pink.

Wednesday 23rd November

RHS SEED BANK

More fascinating information from John Withal of Wakehurst Place.

2012

Wednesday 25th January

BEES IN PERIL, HONEY BEES-HOW THEY LIVE

Tom Moore from the Beekeeping Society helps to keep them buzzing.



Wednesday 22nd February

DOGS FOR THE DISABLED

Malcolm from the Canine Partners Trust who provide dogs to assist people with all kinds of disabilities.

Wednesday 28th March

Talk (to be arranged)

Wednesday 25th April

AGM followed by a talk (to be arranged)

FIELD DAYS

Sandgate Park and Sullington Warren.

Come and have fun and refreshment for just 2 hours on a Saturday morning.

See page 19 and your green Membership Programme for details.

The Sandgate Conservation Society Newsletter is published twice-yearly by Sandgate Conservation Society and is supplied free to all members. One copy per household. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the society.

Contributions for the next edition are welcomed and should be sent by email to:- Jermans@btinternet.com or in hard copy to:- Audrey Algar

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