



SPRING NEWSLETTER –February 2011

Dear Friends,

As I have previously said in these pages, I believe that one of the most important results of the Park's Heritage Lottery Grant was not a physical change but the establishment of the Christchurch Park Management Board. The Board's original remit was "to oversee the management of the Park and to influence the decisions made in the management of the Park". Two members of the Friends sit on the Board. I have little doubt that over the past years the views of the Friends have been heard much more clearly by the Council – and, in turn, we have been able to appreciate more closely the many issues facing the Council. Evidence of this success is the recommendation in the Council's recent "Parks and Open Spaces Vision" that our Board's blueprint should be copied elsewhere in the Borough.

When the Board came to discuss the "Vision" itself, however, it became evident that its own objects and constitution needed to be examined before being rolled out elsewhere. By chance, all three councillors sitting on the Board were also members of the Council's Executive, charged with making final decisions about the "Vision". As such, even though the Board's constitution says that it should "prepare reports for the consideration by the Council's Executive", no such recommendations could be made as the councillors were concerned that this might be a conflict of interest for them. This unsatisfactory state of affairs seemed to undermine the very *raison d'être* of the Management Board. As a result, the Friends suggested that the structure and functions of the Board should be examined by the Council, and this process is ongoing.

In early January, however, Local Government Minister Grant Shapps announced that rules originally designed to prevent councillors from voting on issues in which they could be said to have an interest (but which had been interpreted so broadly as even to prevent discussions by boards set up by Councils themselves) are to be revised. He said: "*It is ridiculous that a community can vote for someone standing on a particular issue, only for that person to be barred from talking about it once in office... Councillors must be given the freedom to properly represent the views of their constituents. The Localism Bill will do just that. It will end the nonsense surrounding predetermination rules that have left councillors up and down the country confused and concerned about whether voicing an opinion on an issue of local importance will lead to charges of bias... We are placing councillors centre stage in their communities with more clout than ever before to get things done for the people they serve. 2011 will truly be the year of councillor power.*" I am confident that our councillors and the Council's officers will want the partnership with the Friends to flourish, as we certainly do. For despite the challenges and economic constraints facing the Park, it is only by working together that we can move forwards.

Richard Wilson

The creation of the New Wolsey Garden iris beds

We are absolutely delighted that renowned iris expert Barry Emmerson has donated not only a huge number of plants but also a great deal of time to create these fabulous new iris beds on the northern side of the Wolsey Garden. His display will not only enhance the garden considerably but also create a real point of interest, especially for iris lovers from around the world. Barry's design includes almost 100 different varieties of iris and later in the year (when some of the plants are in bloom) we plan to publish his full planting plan with photographs. We are even hoping that he might name one of his new hybrids after Christchurch Park... Barry will be giving an illustrated lecture about irises at this year's AGM on Tuesday 29 March (for more details see page 4 of the newsletter), or if you would like to know more, you can also contact him direct on 01728 832650.

Richard Wilson

Barry Emmerson writes: I formed an affection for Christchurch Park in 1959 when, as a four-year old recovering from eye surgery at the old Anglesea Road Hospital, my mother was allowed to take me there in the afternoons to feed the ducks. These are fond memories of tranquil pauses in what was otherwise a rather traumatic experience. It is now particularly pleasing to have been given the opportunity perhaps to provide pleasure to others that visit the Park. Since planting the irises in the Wolsey Garden, I have been informed that the beds I have used were in fact intended to have been planted with irises in Lady Tollemache's original grand design but, in part due to a shortfall in funds, the full scheme was not completed.

Suffolk is synonymous with *iris pseudacorus* (or Yellow Flag Iris) that inhabits many small ditches and streams here. Two notable historic hybridisers of Tall Bearded Irises resided in the county. Mr Chadburn of Middleton near Saxmundham bred a celebrated yellow, "Golden Hind", which was awarded the iris world's top award, The Dykes Medal, before World War II. Flamboyant artist and gardener, Sir Cedric Morris, is accredited as having bred the first pink Tall Bearded Iris "Edward of Windsor". Many of his iris introductions are prefixed with the word "Benton", after his home Benton End near Hadleigh. Four varieties raised by Cedric Morris are included in my planting in the Park having been kindly donated by Sarah Cook. Sarah, who lives close to Ipswich, is painstakingly collecting, identifying and conserving Cedric Morris's iris introductions. Sarah also researches Cedric's life and gives a very interesting and humorous talk on this extraordinary character.

When I joined the British Iris Society some twenty years ago, British iris hybridising was coming towards the end of a golden period. I was fortunate to be tutored by two of the leading breeders, Nora Scopes and, possibly Britain's greatest iris hybridiser of all time, Bryan Dodsworth. Twelve of the fifty or so classically beautiful Tall Bearded Iris varieties bred and named by Bryan have been awarded the previously mentioned Dykes Medal. Sadly, in recent years, British iris enthusiasts have tended to shun home-raised varieties for the over-hyped and latest fad varieties from the USA, while nurseries (such as the well-known one near Blythburgh) prefer to promote and sell iris varieties from the catalogue of the Frenchman Cayeux.

I have planted the beds so as to provide more than just one flush of bloom. The top tier has been planted with varieties of Spuria iris. Spurias originated in North America and bloom from the beginning of June through to mid July. Slightly unruly in habit, they are drought tolerant and the beardless flowers are held on spikes up to 1.8 metres high on some varieties. Irises are divided into two groups – Bearded, so-called because of the hairy protrusions from below the stigma that are the lure to passing insects, and Beardless, on which the beard is replaced by brightly coloured markings. Recent developments through hybridisation have brought about larger flowers and also enlargement of the signal that now (on some varieties) cover most of the surface of the lower petals (known as the falls).

The middle and lower tiers are planted with Tall Bearded varieties that flower in May and June. The planting is centred on British-raised varieties augmented with those raised in America, Europe and Australia. Areas on the bottom tier have been under-planted with the February flowering short Beardless *iris reticulata* and a similar yellow-bloomed type, Danfordii. Bulbs of common varieties of these are readily available in most garden centres from August to October. In all, approximately one hundred different varieties of iris have been used in the display.

Irises often do not bloom in the first season after planting, so please do not judge this display in its first year. It was at the outset (and remains so for 2011) my plan to plant some forms of *iris unguicularis* (sometimes known as Winter Iris, European Iris, or *iris setosa*) in the display. *Unguicularis*, whilst taking a year or two to settle before blooming, flower from October to March and they are, therefore, of great value in the winter months. Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain stock to plant this year. I am also intending to plant some of the more modern, and therefore less common, varieties of *reticulata*. Tall Bearded and Spuria varieties are normally divided every four years. I hope at that point to sell off the divided plants to raise money to replant new varieties of iris in the bed and also to raise funds for other FoCP projects. My hope is for this planting display to bring pleasure whilst raising the profile and interest in the genus iris.

Barry Emmerson

Membership Renewal

Please may we remind all members that subscriptions to the Friends of Christchurch Park (£5 per household) are due annually on 1 March.

We would prefer all members to pay by continuous Standing Order as this considerably reduces our costs. If you already pay by Standing Order, then no further action is required. If not, please return the completed Standing Order Authority AND the Membership Form (both on the last page of this newsletter) to Robert Fairchild. Please call Robert on 01473 254255 if you are in any doubt as to whether you already pay by Standing Order. Of course, we still welcome payment by cash or cheque. If this is your preferred method of payment, please include the completed Membership Form ONLY with your payment and send it to Robert Fairchild before 1 March.

Thank you for continuing to be Friends of Christchurch Park.

Members' events this spring

Saturday 5 March 9.30am – Spring Bird Walk with Philip Murphy

An opportunity to join our avian expert Philip Murphy to observe the varied birdlife of the Park before the trees comes fully into leaf. Meet at the Soane Street entrance to the Park.

Tuesday 29 March 7.30pm – The AGM of the Friends of Christchurch Park

This year's AGM will again be held at the Reg Driver Visitor Centre. We very much hope that all members can join us to discuss what the Friends have been working on for the past year, to enjoy a glass of wine, and to hear Barry Emmerson give an illustrated talk about irises and his newly-planted beds in the Wolsey Garden (see pages 2-3 of the newsletter). Limited car parking will be available via the Bolton Lane entrance. Although the committee has functioned extremely well over the past year, **we really do need new members to join us**. Duties are not onerous, but your enthusiasm and commitment to the Park would be hugely valued. If you would like to stand, please contact Richard Wilson or Ann Snook.

Saturday 14 May 4.30am – Dawn Chorus Walk

An early start! Join Philip Murphy for a fascinating experience as the Park's bats go to sleep and its birds wake up. Learn more about birdsong and enjoy the wonderfully varied wildlife of Christchurch Park. This year we will assemble at the crossroads in the Bridle Way, where the cycle path enters the Arboretum. The event is free to all members and prospective members.

Forthcoming events in the Park and at the Mansion

21–24 February – Animation Stations

Take part in a fabulous 2½hr workshop with professional animators. You will make models, animate scenes and create a film that tells the story of Christchurch Mansion. Everyone's work will be edited onto a finished DVD for you to keep. The cost is £8 per child, plus £1 on the day for your own copy of the finished film. There are two sessions, the first (for 5-8 year-olds only) from 10am – 12.30pm, and the second (for ages 8+) from 2pm – 4.30pm. Booking in advance is essential by calling 01473 433691 or by dropping in to the Mansion.

Sunday 1 May – Ipswich Transport Museum, Ipswich to Felixstowe Rally (TBC) The premier Vintage Car Run in the East of England for vehicles built before 1975. Over 500 cars, motorcycles, lorries, buses, coaches and military vehicles gather in the Park ready at 11.30am for the start of their journey to Felixstowe's Promenade. A free event, open to all.

Thursday 19 May – Out of the Box: Animals in Art

Join our Curator of Art for a closer look at animals that have been depicted by artists ranging from Maggi Hambling's Rosie the Rhino to 19th-century horse racing prints. There is no need to book for this free event, just drop in any time from 2pm – 4pm.

Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 May – Ipswich Food and Drink Festival Details to be confirmed.

Enjoy learning about the Mansion and the families who lived there with 40-minute guided tours at 11am daily (Monday to Saturday) until the end of March, courtesy of the Friends of the Ipswich Museums. No need to book and free (but with a £2 suggested donation).

Autumn Bird Watching Walk, Saturday, 30 October 2010

About 20 people met at the Reg Driver Centre on a glorious autumn morning. The Round Pond held at least 20 Black-headed Gulls, involving a mixture of winter plumage adult and immature birds; it was pointed out that most of these birds were likely to have bred, or been bred, in north-eastern Europe. Also present on the pond were singles of Mandarin Duck and Greylag Goose and a dozen Canada Geese (which had flown in from the direction of Ipswich Docks just before the walk commenced).

The highlight at the Wilderness Pond was the presence of up to eight Mandarin Ducks. Reg Snook pointed out the nesting box that he had made and installed on one of the pond islands in the hope that it would be used by Mandarin Ducks – this year it was used by Mallards and similar boxes elsewhere had been occupied by Grey Squirrels! Jays were regularly seen and heard in the Wilderness Pond area and three Skylarks high overhead headed west. Given the date, a Peacock butterfly sighting was slightly unexpected.

Two Redwings, a winter-visiting thrush from Scandinavia, were seen and heard in flight as we entered the Park's open area. We spent several minutes observing two pairs of Stock Doves in the trees at the bottom of Snow Hill; it was pointed out that these unobtrusive doves are a real feature of the Park in which a dozen pairs are probably present. As we watched the doves, a noisy Mistle Thrush flew over giving its harsh, rattling flight call.

A Fieldfare, another winter-visiting Scandinavian thrush, called from trees near the Mayors' Walk, and we eventually saw it in flight. Despite much effort, we failed to find any Nuthatches in their once-favoured trees near the play area; however, we were informed that Nuthatches had been seen recently in the area of the Mansion, which is very encouraging news.

Unfortunately, there was no sign of Mabel the Tawny Owl at her roosting tree [see page 10 for an update], but the latest information was that an owl had been seen in this area recently and a pair of owls had bred successfully in the Park this year.

Finally, we visited the Wildlife Reserve where Reg informed us of the different designs of nest boxes that had been erected in the reserve over the last 20 years. By standing and watching patiently we managed to locate at least three Goldcrests high up in a strand of pine trees which neatly completed the morning's walk.

Many thanks to everybody who attended this short outing and particularly to Reg Snook, whose detailed knowledge of the Park and its birds gave us all a fascinating insight into the area's natural history.

Philip Murphy

Laura Whitfield moves on...

We are sorry that the Park has lost its Wildlife Ranger, Laura Whitfield, to the wilds of Scotland. Laura will be remembered for her particular enthusiasm for bats and also for working closely with various members of the Friends on a number of wildlife projects. We wish her well for the future. To contact the Rangers, or to find out what events they will be running in the Park in 2011, please telephone 01473 433993.

Discovering hedgerow wildlife in Christchurch Park

An exciting new project about the wildlife of English hedgerows will come to Christchurch Park this year. Ipswich Borough Council Wildlife Rangers and Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership (SBP) have linked up with the Open Air Laboratories project (OPAL) to encourage people to look closely at hedgerows, to learn about the wildlife living there and to record what they see.

Visitors to Christchurch Park will be able to contribute to valuable research, learn more about the importance of hedges and what wildlife they support. This will give us a more detailed picture of the beetles, bugs and other animals found in Christchurch Park. The records will also be used to gain a national picture of hedgerows through OPAL's database.

OPAL's aim is to get people exploring, studying, enjoying and protecting their local environment by participating in a range of surveys including air quality, soil and earthworms and biodiversity. We are inviting everyone who visits the Park to get involved with *Discovering Hedgerow Wildlife* and find out how exciting it can be to observe the intricate web of nature at close quarters. It is even possible to find new species in Britain! Earlier this year, a fly never before seen in Britain was found through the i-Spot project, part of OPAL. Read about this on the i-Spot website (<http://ispot.org.uk>). We can't promise this will happen in Ipswich, but you never know.

The surveys will take place in Christchurch and Holywells Parks throughout the year, starting with a school launch event in May. This will show how the composition of the invertebrates in hedgerows changes with the seasons. Survey packs will be available from the Reg Driver Visitor Centre in Christchurch Park and from the Stable Block in Holywells Park.

Further details will be available in February. In the meantime, if any Friends of Christchurch Park would like to help with the survey, please contact Gen Broad, Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership, telephone 01473 264308, or email gen.broad@suffolk.gov.uk. To find out more about OPAL, visit <http://www.opalexplorenature.org>.

Gen Broad

Outcomes from the 2010 Nagoya Biodiversity Summit

You may remember that we previewed this conference in our last newsletter. At the conclusion of the conference in November, IYB-UK, the UK partnership for the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, issued the following round-up of what happened:

"In the final hours of COP10 (COP – Conference of the Parties), a consensus was achieved on the three main components of the convention. Delegates voted in support of:

- *a protocol on access to and sharing of the benefits of biodiversity*
- *a new strategic plan with targets for 2020*
- *a resources (finance) mobilization plan*

While there is still much work to be done, in particular in developing the resource mobilization plan for full agreement and adoption at the COP11, the outcome is considerably better than had been feared earlier in the conference."

For more details, please see the website www.biodiversityislife.net.

Christchurch Park Boules Club 2011 – meet, greet and practice

The Christchurch Park Boules Club is looking for new members to fill the remaining four spaces for the forthcoming 2011 season. They will be holding their "Winter Woolies" practice and get-together session on Sunday 30 January, from 11am until around 2pm at "The Triangle" in the Park, and they would love to see you there. (The Triangle is the newly-restored patch of ground – courtesy of the Ipswich Society and the Friends of Christchurch Park – right beside the Christchurch Mansion café, between the Mansion and the Round Pond.)

There are two levels of membership available: £12 per person for the entire 2011 season if you already own your own boules, or £20 per person if you don't own your own set – the extra £8 will allow the Club to purchase a set of three leisure boules for you to use, which are then yours to keep. These places are offered on a first come, first served basis, so if you are interested, please contact Simon Fletcher with your address details and he will send you a registration form. Attending the event on 30 January will allow the Club to divide the membership into the two teams for the coming season, and be an opportunity for everyone to meet everyone else.

For further details of this event, or if you would like to sign up for the season, please write to Simon Fletcher, League Co-ordinator of the Suffolk Coastal Pétanque League, c/o 18 Melville Road, Ipswich, IP4 1PN, or email him at imogenlewiskira@sky.com.

On your bike!

Just before Christmas, some of you may have been surprised to see a large number of bicycles on display outside the Reg Driver Centre. Although the deep snow meant that weather conditions were not exactly conducive to cycling (and of course cycling in the Park is only permitted on the east/west cycle path and down the Bridle Way), these bikes were there for a very good reason.

The Green Bike Project, run by the local charity Orwell Mencap, was presenting a collection of its refurbished bicycles for sale to the public. The project, which has been running at our sister park Holywells for just over a year, works with disabled people to restore and renew unwanted second-hand bikes which are then sold on to the public. On this occasion, they were given the opportunity to tempt Christmas shoppers in Christchurch Park.

If any member of the Friends has an unwanted bicycle cluttering up a garage or shed, they are encouraged to contact the project manager, Aelein Worrall, who is based at the Stable Block in Holywells Park. Alternatively, if perhaps your New Year's resolution is to get fitter and you would like to purchase one of the restored bikes, please telephone 07905 336111.

Dogs in the Arboretum

You may have seen the newly-installed posts in the Arboretum reminding dog walkers that their animals are required to be on leads whilst in this area of the Park. Please also keep your dog on a lead whilst in the Wildlife Reserve.

The four seasons in haiku

Dark Sky Dancing by Richard Stewart with illustrations by Anne-Marie Stewart (two Friends of Christchurch Park) was published by Reuben Books in August 2010. Although Richard may be better known to some of us as our local butterfly expert, he is also an accomplished poet whose poems and articles have been published in over 200 titles including *The Lady*, *The Countryman* and *The Observer*. Each of the four sections in this book contains twenty eight haiku, covering the seasons of the year and roughly following the day from dawn and early morning to dusk and night. Most of them are wedded to the natural cycle of the year but a few, deliberately and conversely, comment on that other more urban world, often divorced from nature.

This 40 page soft-cover booklet contains artwork from four quilts that reflect the seasons by Anne-Marie Stewart who has won thirteen awards in national competitions, exhibited her work at over a hundred locations in Britain, and whose invited quilts have been shown in Australia, America and Europe. *Dark Sky Dancing* can be purchased direct from Reuben Books (c/o Pear Tree Cottage, Longcot, SN7 7SS, email: info@reubenbooks.co.uk) for only £4.00 including free postage and packing.

Did you know that...?

...41% of visits to the natural environment are to parks. A survey by Natural England, Defra and the Forestry Commission has found that 41% of total visits to the natural environment in England are to green spaces, such as Christchurch Park, within town or city locations. The research, "Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment", was commissioned to address the lack of information about how and why people engage with the natural environment. The data also highlighted the importance of accessible local green space, with journeys of less than two miles accounting for two-thirds of all visits.

...91% of people believe that public parks and open spaces improve their quality of life. (CABE 2004 Public Attitudes to Architecture and public Space: Transforming Neighbourhoods, by MORI, unpublished.)

"...The more often a person visits urban open green spaces, the less often he or she will report stress-related illnesses." (Landscape planning and stress, Urban Forestry and Urban Greening, Grahn and Stigsdotter, 2003.)

...Three out of four people visit a public green space at least once a month, more than a quarter do so at least three times a week, and a tenth of the population do so every day. (Sustainable Development Indicators, DEFRA, 2007.)

..."If parks and green spaces are well-managed, research has shown that communities use their local spaces more, have better relationships with their local councils and take some pride in the area where they live." (Urban Green Nation: Building the Evidence Base, CABE Space 2010.)

...and are you surprised?

Trees

The Friends' committee made a detailed response to last November's extensive planning application for works to nearly 200 trees in the Park. Although we were initially disappointed not to be officially consulted, Sam Pollard and assistant arboricultural officer Steve Leech subsequently spent a considerable amount of time with Richard Wilson inspecting the trees and talking through the proposals. Most of the works (which will be spread over two seasons) are to diseased, dead, or dying limbs or trees and we fully respect the judgement of the arboricultural team with regard to these. A small number of proposed works were for aesthetic or other reasons (for example felling to prevent leaf drop in the wet meadow), and following representation from the Friends, these were excluded from the planning consent for the time being. They will be the subject of a separate planning application in the future following detailed consultation with the Friends and the Park's Management Board. Members may not be aware of the fact that there are over 4,000 trees in the Park, nor that the Council has a 2 for 1 planting policy across the Borough. This means that two trees are planted for every one that has to be removed. We have asked the Council that when a particularly special tree has to be felled in Christchurch Park (for example the dying Bhutan Pine, No. 1 in the Park's Tree Trail publication), a similar specimen is planted within the Park itself.

Works to the children's orchard are well under way, with border saplings planted and fencing and a viewing platform in place (see Sam Pollard's piece for more details).

The Cobbold Family in Ipswich

On 8, 9 and 10 April, we will be celebrating the installation of some new interpretation panels in the Reg Driver Visitor Centre. The Cobbold Family History Trust has generously supplied these panels, which provide information on the Cobbold's important role in the history of Ipswich – most notably the generous donation of Christchurch Mansion to the people of Ipswich in 1895.

Some of the panels tell the wonderful story of Margaret Catchpole, legendary for her heroic actions and tendency to live outside of the law. During her time working for the family of John and Elizabeth Cobbold (immortalized as Mrs Leo Hunter in Charles Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*) in Bolton Lane, Margaret rescued one of the children from the Round Pond, narrowly avoided two hangings and was then deported to Australia for escaping from jail. Her extraordinary story is told in *The History of Margaret Catchpole – A Suffolk Girl* by the Cobbold's son Richard (dating from the 1840's), and more recently, Carol Birch's 2007 novel *Scapegallow*.

Our celebrations will include original watercolours by the Reverend Richard Cobbold and displays of paper cutting. The interpretation panels will be with us for the next two years but please book these special dates in your diary to enjoy the full experience. The Reg Driver Centre is open daily from 10am – 4pm.

Sam Pollard

Winter Wildlife Update...

It has been a great winter for Waxwings. I am sure that many of you will have seen some of these spectacular winter visitors from Scandinavia. Besides being very beautiful, Waxwings are also extremely tame birds when feeding in our gardens on berries from ornamental shrubs.

There has been much bird activity in our Park. The first bird of note is, of course, our famous Tawny Owl Mabel. Most days you can see her perched high up in her tree, gazing down on all of us passing below. Some months ago we thought that we had lost our favourite bird as she had temporarily disappeared. But she duly reappeared to give pleasure to us all. In my opinion, she did not actually disappear from the Park. Some afternoons when I walked through the Park the Tawny Owl was not there, but on walking back from Town later in the day there she would be, looking plump and satisfied. Tawnies do not usually fly during the day so it is safe to assume that she often roosts lower down in the hollow tree and then when the daylight begins to fade, up she pops. In any case, she is more often seen than not. I find it amusing to see Mabel sitting in her tree with her eyes closed and a whole battery of cameras pointing up at her. She is indeed famous.

During the autumn I mentioned the decline of our Nuthatches and feared that, like the Spotted Flycatcher, we had lost this amusing and attractive woodland bird. However, our new member Chris Fincham of Bolton Lane regularly has two Nuthatches visiting his birdfeeder. Chris's garden backs on to the Park so it seems that we still have a very small population of Nuthatches and there was a very vociferous Nuthatch near the children's play area during the first week of January.

Surely you must have seen the Swans on the Round Pond? These are Mute Swans, not the truly wild Bewick and Whooper Swans which arrive here from the frozen wastes of Northern Europe. Nevertheless, these three swans, two adults and an immature bird, have been a major attraction. They have been here for a couple of months now and feed on the weed that grows from the watery depths of the Round Pond. Often all that can be seen of these Swans are their bottoms sticking up from the water. No wonder people smile when passing.

The Wilderness Pond is looking splendid. Our duck and geese are in prime condition. Look for the Mandarins; they can usually be seen perched on the fence posts on the islands. A more magnificent duck will be hard to find. Finally, many of our songbirds are beginning to sing – after all, spring is on its way. Listen for Mistle and Song Thrushes who are in fine voice, whilst Great Tits are also pumping out their song.

Reg Snook

Do you remember this...?

“Pat Heathcote, 57, was knocked out by a Canada goose that hit her on the head as it came in to land on a pond at Christchurch Park, Ipswich. She received bruises to her head and nose and was brought round by a bystander with first-aid training.”

The Times, 28 December 2000

Sam's Notes

Happy New Year! A warm welcome (weather wise) to 2011 – well, warmer than we ended 2010... We all know that warmth at this time of year often comes hand-in-hand with wind and rain. So the Park is now getting a good soaking – never a bad thing, but it does mean that venturing onto the grass in the lower parts of the Park can be a squelchy experience. Rather different from the slippery times we had before Christmas. Which reminds me to remind you about visiting the Park in winter: it is impossible for us to clear snow and ice from every path in the Park. So if we do get a return to icy conditions, please make sure that you take extra care on your visits here. We will endeavour to grit the worst of the slopes to allow routes through the Park, but we may also have to close some other paths. However, we do ask that you consider your route and be aware of the conditions. The Brett Fountain, presently covered in plywood, will be repaired only when the frosts have gone. This is a requirement, as the repairs will use lime in the mortar.

We have been working hard on a project around the wildlife areas over the last twelve months. This project, put together by Laura Whitfield (Wildlife Ranger) before she left, was funded by Councillors Lockington and Cann and also by the Friends. During October and November we installed some new steps to replace the older tarmac ones (see the photograph below). We hope native shrubs will grow around these steps, which will help connect the old “Bird Reserve” with the wooded area to the north and which are all now part of the renamed Wildlife Reserve.

We have also nearly completed the most exciting element of this wildlife project. In the area where the old leaf yard used to be (which was subsequently the dump for all the silt from the ponds during the Heritage Lottery works), 32 new orchard trees have been planted to recreate a traditional Suffolk orchard. The trees chosen include Pear, Plum, Damson, Apple and Cobnut. They are all traditional species which will develop over time to provide us with a wildlife-friendly, child-friendly, fruity “centre of learning”. Around the edge of the orchard we have thickened up hedgerows, put in a fence and provided a viewing platform looking out into the adjacent treetops. This orchard will be available for everyone to enjoy but specifically it will be a natural resource for school children.

Thinking ahead to the summer, we are very pleased that Kathryn Jenkins will be joining us for the “Last night of the Proms” on 2 July. I am sure that Kathryn will be just one of the highlights of the many Ip-Art events in and around the Park. Tickets are already available from the IBC Box Office.

I am continuing to send some of you Reg Snooks' wildlife notes and other relevant Park information via email. If you would like receive these updates, please send me your email address (mentioning “Christchurch Park News”) to me at sam.pollard@ipswich.gov.uk.

Sam Pollard, Area Supervisor Christchurch Park & Central



These wonderfully curvaceous steps leading up to the new orchard replace the old, worn-out tarmac.

Picture courtesy of Peter Howard-Dobson

FoCP COMMITTEE MEMBERS – 2010/11

(To year ending AGM – March 2011)

Chairman and
Vice-Chair of the Park
Management Board:

Richard Wilson, 50 Westerfield Road, Ipswich, IP4 2UT
Phone: 01473 230105
Email: redgar_wilson@hotmail.com

Deputy Chairman
and Treasurer:

Peter Grimwade, 79a Henley Road, Ipswich, IP1 3SB
Phone: 01473 257016
Email: peter@brockpool.co.uk

Secretary:

Ann Snook, 5 Manor Road, Ipswich, IP4 2UX
Phone: 01473 251037
Email: ann.snook@virgin.net

Membership Secretary:

Robert Fairchild, 10 June Avenue, Ipswich, IP1 4LT
Phone: 01473 254255
Email: robert.fairchild@ntlworld.com

ParkMobile:

Ken Lightfoot, 30 Ivry Street, Ipswich, IP1 3QW
Phone: 01473 251749

Events/Meetings:

David Routh, 62 High Street, Ipswich, IP1 3QS
Phone: 01473 255680

Committee Member
and Member of the
Park Management Board

Peter Howard-Dobson, 52 Westerfield Rd, Ipswich, IP4 2UT
Phone: 01473 210494
Email: peter@hdhq.co.uk

ParkMobile Bookings

For all enquiries and bookings, please contact the Reg Driver Centre on 01473 252435

Articles for our next newsletter

The next newsletter will be sent to all members in early summer. We would be delighted to receive articles or letters from our members, and anyone wishing to contribute should write to Richard Wilson, either by post or email (please see above for contact details). We reserve the right to edit all submitted material for publication. The deadline for contributions is 1 May.

Membership

We warmly welcome the following new Friends
who bring the number of members to 316 households,
and our new Corporate Member, Christchurch Dental

Mr R Compton, Pamela & Jerry Pickard, Mrs Dorothy Brenton
Mrs Teresa Lincoln, Mrs Wendy Matthews, Mrs Ann Lewington
Mr CJ & Mrs DVA Fincham, Peter & Frances Finch

Corporate Members

Woodcock & Son

(Estate Agents)
16 Arcade Street
Ipswich IP1 1EP
01473 233355
www.woodcockandson.co.uk
(FoCP contact John Woodcock)

Ipswich School

Henley Road
Ipswich IP1 3SG
01473 408300
www.ipswich.suffolk.sch.uk
(FoCP contact Peter Gray)

Gilmour Piper and Associates

Osteopathy & Integrated Healthcare
10 Fonnereau Road
Ipswich IP1 3JP
01473 217592
www.gilmourpiper.co.uk
(FoCP contact Andrew Gilmour)

Scrutton Bland

(Accountants)
Sanderson House
Museum Street
Ipswich IP1 1HE
01473 259201
www.scruttonbland.co.uk
(FoCP contact John Pickering)

Orwell Veterinary Group

Berners House Surgery
56 Berners Street
Ipswich IP1 3LU
01473 257557
www.orwellvets.co.uk
(FoCP contact Charles Bagnall)

W.D Coe Limited

20-28 Norwich Road
Ipswich IP1 2NG
01473 256061
www.coes.co.uk
(FoCP contact William Coe)

The Will Shop

84 Berners Street
Ipswich IP1 3LU
01473 233110
www.thewillshop.com
(FoCP contact Adam Muldoon)

Kerseys Solicitors

32 Lloyds Avenue
Ipswich IP1 3HD
01473 213311
www.kerseys-law.co.uk
(FoCP contact Anthony Wooding)

Christchurch Dental

69 Fonnereau Road
Ipswich IP1 3JN
01473 250977
www.christchurchdental.co.uk
(FoCP contact Derek van Staden)

Membership Subscriptions – IMPORTANT

All subscriptions to the Friends of Christchurch Park (£5 per household) are due annually on 1 March. To help reduce our administration costs, we would prefer all members to pay by continuous Standing Order. If you already pay by Standing Order NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED. If not, please send the completed Standing Order Authority AND the Membership Form (at the bottom of the page) to Robert Fairchild.

Please call Robert on 01473 254255 if you are in any doubt as to whether you already pay by Standing Order.

We appreciate that Standing Orders are not always suitable and we still welcome payment by cash or cheque. Please include the completed Membership Form (below) with your payment and send to Robert Fairchild at the address below before 1 March.

*

STANDING ORDER AUTHORITY

Account to be credited:
Bank:
Account Number: 02952840

Friends of Christchurch Park
Lloyds Bank, Cornhill, Ipswich
Sort Code: 30-94-55

Account name to be debited:

Bank and Branch:

Amount: £5.00 (five pounds)

Please pay to the Friends of Christchurch Park annually on the 1st March until further notice

Signed:

Date:

(detach here)
here)

(detach

MEMBERSHIP FORM

I have enclosed a new Standing Order Authority

Please find enclosed a cheque for £5 made payable to Friends of Christchurch Park

Please find enclosed a cash payment of £5

(Please tick as appropriate)

Name(s):

Address and Postcode: