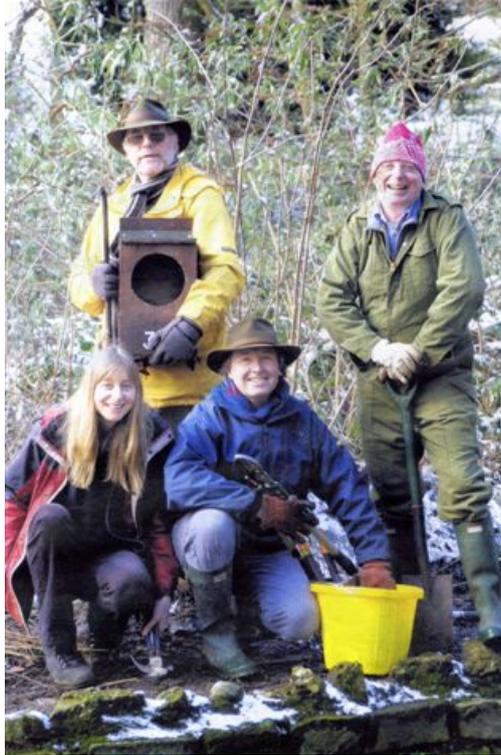




SUMMER NEWSLETTER – June 2010



Dear Friends,

If memories of the cold winter are beginning to fade, this photograph reminds me of a couple of really bitter days when a group of us helped Ranger Laura Whitfield to remove fencing from the islands in the Wilderness Pond and put up over thirty birdboxes that had been generously made and donated by Reg Snook (see over for the full story). It was but one of the activities that the Friends have been a part of recently, and this summer I hope that as many as possible will take advantage of the huge variety of events taking place in the Park. In addition to the fifteen Ip-art events, there are pony rides, history walks, free tennis coaching, craft activities in the Mansion and of course our very own “Brass on the Grass” concerts. Please see inside for more details.

But the Park is also a place for tranquil enjoyment of the wonderful surroundings and we are really delighted that the Council has acceded to our request for 7am opening, seven days a week throughout the year. I recommend that hour on a Sunday morning to really see the Park at its most peaceful...

There truly is something for everyone in Christchurch Park this summer.

Richard Wilson

Winter Work in the Park

During the winter, when a layer of snow covered the grass and the Park's ponds were coated in thick ice, a small party of Friends, with the help of Park Ranger Laura Whitfield, went to work. Thirty-four bird boxes were constructed (free of charge) from off-cut and unwanted wood. They were put up in the trees in the Wildlife area to encourage Blue and Great Tits to nest, with four boxes made particularly for Treecreepers (at Laura's special request). Work was carried out also on the Wilderness Pond islands including erecting four boxes to encourage Mandarin Ducks to breed. Peter Howard-Dobson was in charge of the boat, and it was thanks to his navigational icebreaking skills that our intrepid team was able to reach the islands. Health and Safety Rules, okay! Interesting items found on the islands included a mobile phone, a wallet (empty) and a dead Black-Headed Gull that had been ringed in Stockholm.

It seems that all our hard work during the ice and snow of the winter, putting up bird boxes and dismantling much of the fencing around the Wilderness Pond islands, has paid off. The fencing erected about two years ago had unfortunately prevented most of the wildfowl from breeding; hopefully in the coming autumn the remainder will also disappear. Late April saw only male Mallard on the Wilderness Pond – presumably the females had found enough cover to lay clutches of eggs. Crows and Magpies had plundered many eggs but it is to be hoped that there will be many ducklings that do hatch. The next hazard awaiting these unsuspecting little ducklings will be the Herring and Lesser Black Backed Gulls as there are now more of these marauding birds than ever. They have become a serious problem for several reasons.

Springtime is a noisy time for Canada Geese – the Wilderness Pond is home to several pairs of these large geese. At the time of writing this article the goslings were beginning to hatch – are the parent birds capable of fending off the aggressive gulls? We shall see. As I said earlier, we put up four large duck boxes specifically to attract the Mandarin Ducks. At first I thought that this project had failed because it seemed that two boxes had been commandeered by grey squirrels and that Stock Doves were nesting in another. In mid-April no Mandarins were to be seen but in the last week of April two male birds were seen perched on the posts that the working party had been unable to remove. It is just possible therefore that the females were incubating eggs. I hope so. But again, if there are young ducklings, the chances of them surviving the attacks of the large gulls are very slim.

The last week of April brought us welcome warmth and sunshine. The Wildlife Reserve was alive with birdsong. Surprisingly, there was a large population of singing wrens, one bird every ten to fifteen metres. The severe winter weather was supposed to have drastically reduced wren numbers but not, it seems, in Christchurch Park. A large proportion of the thirty or so bird boxes appeared to have been occupied. Both Blue and Great Tits peck away at the edges of the entrance hole when the box is going to be used. Almost all of the boxes were in such condition. It is a good year for Blackcaps too. These migrant warblers, together with Chiff-Chaffs were very vocal. Goldcrests too seemed to have survived the winter in good numbers. Hopefully it will be a good breeding season for our smaller songbirds but we have to remember that the Wildlife area is also home to Carrion Crows, Jays, Magpies, Grey Squirrels and a pair of Sparrowhawks. The outcome will be interesting.

Reg Snook

Do take a look at the Friends' Notice Board (just outside the Reg Driver Centre) for Reg's fortnightly bird and wildlife reports.

FoCP “Brass on the Grass” concerts

This year the Friends are putting on five “Brass on the Grass” concerts on consecutive Sundays featuring some of the very best bands in East Anglia. The concerts take place by the Arts and Crafts Shelter in the Arboretum and although we provide some seating, you are welcome to bring your own chairs/rugs and of course a picnic or other refreshments. The ParkMobile will be giving free rides around the Park and an ice-cream van will be in attendance. All concerts run for two hours, beginning at 2.30pm, and are completely FREE. Once again we are extremely grateful to our sponsors who make these concerts possible.

18 July **The Suffolk Concert Band** (sponsored by The Ipswich Society)
25 July **Ipswich and Norwich Co-op Band** sponsored by the East of England Co-op
1 August **Phoenix Brass** sponsored by a generous Friend of Christchurch Park
8 August **Ipswich Hospital Band** sponsored by Scrutton Bland, Accountants
15 August **Stacks of Sax** sponsored by the Lions Club of Ipswich

Birdwatching Walk in Christchurch Park on Saturday 7 March

It is very pleasing to report that, thanks to excellent FoCP publicity, as many as 28 Friends attended this springtime walk. The weather was dry but cold which reduced severely the amount of birdsong in the Park.

Black-headed Gulls in various states of plumage on the Round Pond created plenty of discussion – they were accompanied by a solitary, but very aggressive, Common Gull. The most unexpected sight on the Wilderness Pond was that of a female Mallard repeatedly diving for food at the bottom of the pond. The Mallard is generally thought of as being a surface-feeding duck so the behaviour that we observed was distinctly atypical. Much territorial aggression was noted amongst the Canada Geese on this pond too.

Reg Snook pointed out the various bird-nesting boxes that he had made and erected (with the help of two other Friends and Laura, the Wildlife Ranger) on the Wilderness Pond islands and in the Wildlife Reserve; these varied from larger boxes designed for Mandarin Ducks down to smaller boxes for Tits and Treecreepers. Birds seen and/or heard in the Wildlife Reserve included the Great Spotted Woodpecker, Jay, Goldcrest and Wren.

The pace quickened when we walked out into the open area of the Park. Stock Doves and Jackdaws were noted in the older trees and a Nuthatch was heard calling, although we failed to see this distinctive resident of the Park. Excellent views were obtained of a Green Woodpecker in a treetop, and as we were watching this resplendent bird it uttered its distinctive call. A Great Spotted Woodpecker was heard drumming nearby but the roosting hole that had until recently been used by Mabel our Tawny Owl was today occupied by a pair of Stock Doves. The walk ended with excellent views on the open grass area of up to 100 Redwings, small Thrushes that are winter visitors to Britain. By early March they are getting ready for the return journey to Scandinavia which involves them building up their fat reserves so that they have sufficient energy to fly across the North Sea. The Redwings that we observed were feeding avidly as if their departure time was getting close – we look forward to seeing them and their offspring in the autumn.

Many thanks to everybody who attended this walk, in particular Reg Snook and Peter Scotcher who provided such invaluable knowledge and background information.

Philip Murphy

IBC Working Group updating Ipswich's Park Byelaws

Back in September 2009, the committee of the Friends of Christchurch Park asked me if I'd represent the FoCP on a "Working Group" being set up by Ipswich Borough Council to review the current Park byelaws (these byelaws dating back to 1984). Actually, the way it worked was that Richard Wilson, our indefatigable Chairman, asked for volunteers and I suddenly found everyone else was looking at me in a fairly expectant way, which made me think that Richard had prepared the ground pretty thoroughly ahead of the meeting! Anyway, I was only too pleased to get involved and to find out a little bit more about how local government operated.

It turned out that the working group would comprise three Councillors, an Ipswich Borough Council team of three led by Andy Sheppard, and yours truly. The initial meeting didn't take place until 27 November 2009, because it proved very difficult to get all these people to match their diaries. However, in the mean time, I'd had an opportunity to read a set of "Model Byelaws" drafted by the Department for Local Government and Communities back in 2006 (the wheels of government grind somewhat slow). The Model Byelaws seemed pretty comprehensive, but with one notable exception – there was nothing in them about dogs and their control, while this was certainly something addressed in the current Byelaws.

Andy Sheppard explained, at the first meeting of our group, that the process proposed by the then Secretary of State (Hazel Blears) to councils across England & Wales, was to adopt wording for new Byelaws that was to be drawn from her department's model – our task being to select appropriate sets of wordings from a range of pre-defined choices approved by them. We were not, therefore, starting with either the current Byelaws or a clean sheet of paper. Mr Sheppard also explained the reason for the absence of any reference to dogs – their control now being the subject of separate national legislation, and therefore not relevant to the lesser byelaws. This seemed small comfort to the councillor team and yours truly, but we left it at that for the moment.

The remainder of this, and two subsequent meetings held in January and February, was taken up with considering the model byelaws and, in many cases, debating amendments to them in order to make them more specific, more relevant, or simply more realistic. For example, the model outlawed all climbing in Ipswich's parks, ignoring the presence of children's play areas and their climbing-frames – it seemed daft to effectively criminalise appropriate use of this equipment, and to rely on 'reasonable excuse' as a defence. We also sought to ensure that, while there should always be an emphasis on careful and reasonable behaviour, our parks should welcome most forms of leisure activity in most areas, though with strict designation of the areas or routes for things like bicycling and horse riding.

At our final meeting, and after Borough Council consultation with the Communities Department, it turned out that there was, after all, an opportunity to include something about the control of dogs – but only if the wording of the existing byelaw, dealing with dogs, were to be imported in its entirety. Although this means retaining strange requirements, such as the need for greyhounds to be muzzled (!), it seemed preferable to there being no mention of dogs at all, and so the working group's recommendation was that we should adopt this option.

Our report and proposed new byelaws have, since then, been doing the rounds of Ipswich Borough Council and should shortly be presented to other interested parties – including

the Christchurch Park Management Board. The original plan was that the final document should go to the full Council meeting this June, but the general election has rather thrown the timetable, and it now seems likely that it will be the September meeting of the Council that will consider the report. If it's approved at this stage, then the revised bylaws should go to the Secretary of State for his approval. However, just to add another level of uncertainty, the change of Government has replaced Hazel Blears (L) with Eric Pickles (C) in charge of Local Government and Communities, and the department's website indicates that "all current content is under review"!

Watch this space....

Peter Howard-Dobson

Wield your camera to capture the weird, wild and wonderful in Ipswich

We have received the following press release from the Borough Council's Wildlife and Education Rangers, and would like to encourage all keen photographers to feature Christchurch Park in their submissions:

'We have launched a special photography competition celebrating Ipswich's fine parks and open spaces. The Borough Council's Wildlife and Education Rangers are challenging the people of Ipswich to wield their cameras to capture the weird, wild and wonderful in green spaces across the town.

The theme of this competition is "Urban Biodiversity", which means that your pictures should have the natural world at their heart and should feature animals and/or plants. However, the theme is open to interpretation and we would like you to be imaginative with your pictures, so grab your camera, get out and see what you can discover. The competition runs right through the spring and summer, providing plenty of exciting photo opportunities before the closing date on 31 August 2010.

Ranger Matt Berry, himself a keen photographer, said: "This competition is a chance for people to get out and discover the hidden corners and creatures of Ipswich's wonderful open spaces. We are really excited to see what the public capture with their cameras and are planning an exhibition of photographs at the end of the competition too when we will be able to show everyone the variety of wildlife that is right under our noses!"

Prizes up for grabs include an exclusive Foliopic Plus membership and a professional quality website worth £119, courtesy of competition sponsor ephotozine.com. There are two categories, Adults and Under 16's, and entrants can submit up to four photos as mounted prints, in colour or black and white. Please read the full list of competition rules on our website before entering: www.ipswich.gov.uk/rangers.

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity and this competition is part of what Ipswich Borough Council are doing to support the initiative and help promote and protect Biodiversity.

For further information you can telephone Matt Berry on 01473 433993 or email him at: matt.berry@ipswich.gov.uk

Volunteer gardening – by comedian, actor and author Alexei Sayle

In the Sixties during China's Cultural Revolution, intellectuals, doctors, teachers and writers were forced out of the cities and into the countryside to work on the land alongside the peasantry. As a teenage Maoist, this seemed to me like a brilliant idea; in the tiny Marxist group I was a part of we had a notion that there was a dignity and nobility inherent in physical work that those tied to desks could never experience.

Into my forties I still believed in this idea, and continued looking unsuccessfully for a way to work my body as hard as I worked my mind. I'd tried gyms, aerobics and martial arts, but these all seemed self-indulgent and circular, pedalling bicycles that went nowhere or punching the hell out of bags full of foam that had never done me any harm. For a while I thought that buying a house in the countryside might be the way forward, but the sheer enormity of the tasks confronting me combined with my ignorance of all to do with growing things filled me with despair. I would stand staring in horror at a row of carrots planted by the previous owner of the house with no idea of what to do next before finally trying to dig them up using a cassette recorder.

Then, in the mid-Nineties, my wife suggested that I sign up as a volunteer for one day a week at an eco-park near my house. There I discovered that though our little Maoist group might have been wrong about almost everything, it turned out that we had been right about the sheer exhilaration of doing physical work in the open air. At that eco-park I enjoyed all the good things about working on a chain gang without the downside of the guards in the mirror shades beating you to death.

Camley Street Natural Park, the place where I volunteered, is the first patch of land you pass as your Eurostar train slides out of St. Pancras International. Look right and there are trees, a meadow dotted with wild flowers and a lake, around which flit all manner of insects, birds, voles, bats and frogs. Each Wednesday I would join a mixed troupe of retired people, residents of social care homes and students studying on environmental courses to weed, dig and plant. Deep inside this verdant urban paradise it was a wonderful experience to switch off my brain and just work. I particularly appreciated not having to make any decisions, instead being told exactly what to do for the entire day. Merrily I would dig and plant and chop, learning as I went along. In those days the area around King's Cross was not the trendy shopping and work hub it has now become, and once a month we would be sent picking syringes and other debris of drug taking and prostitution out of the undergrowth. But I even enjoyed that chore.

And against expectations I also discovered I had a talent. During my first spring I turned out to be the best in my work detail at making what are called "living fences". This task involved intricately cutting and weaving willow branches into a palisade that would sprout in the summer to become a vigorous green barrier. Surprisingly, I found unearthing this skill quite a profound and visceral experience, as if this dexterity had been buried deep in my DNA and was passed down to me from long-forgotten relatives. As I laboured, absorbed in my work, I imagined that in some Jewish ghetto in 19th-century Latvia there had been a man known to all as "Saylovich the Fence Maker".

Alexei Sayle's memoir, *Stalin Ate My Homework*, will be published in September. If you would like to volunteer in the Park please contact Sam Pollard, or join a group of the Friends who meet at 10am on the first Monday of each month to tend to the Park Road borders.

News from Laura Whitfield, our Park Wildlife Ranger

Wildlife Reserve

Many of you will have noticed that we have begun installing the way marker bollards at the entrances to the Reserve, and that the southern edge has now been re-fenced. The bollards clearly mark out the Reserve which now includes the area of alder carr woodland to the north of the Reserve. ["Alder Carr" is a term used for areas where alder flourish in boggy or marshy ground. Often a haven for wildlife, these once proliferated in East Anglia but are now quite rare.] The fencing has opened up the path that runs alongside the pond making it more inviting, and we're now less likely to be stung by nettles! The former steps to the north have been seeded with woodland edge wildflower mixture and I am in talks with our contractor about building a new set of steps above the roots of the surrounding pines. This will run up the middle of the woodland glade where a desire line has already formed.

Children's Orchard

After consulting with the Suffolk Biodiversity Partnership's Traditional Orchard advisor, we are looking at putting giant pears and plums in the former leaf yard, with a surrounding hedgerow of damsons, bullace and other hedgerow fruits. We have received a donation which will help tremendously with the funding of this project. This orchard will be part of the wider Ipswich Traditional Orchard Project that aims to put a traditional orchard in every Park and Open Space.

Butterfly Garden

This area just to the northwest of the Wilderness Pond is being maintained as a short sward until early next year when it will be planted up. We have a first draft of the design, which is still in the process of being finalized. Our next steps are to finish the design and get it priced. There will be a path running through it with a seating area in the middle. It will contain native and non-native flowering plants (self-seeded buddleia will be encouraged), wildflower and grassland meadows with a few strategically placed, small, fine-leaved trees.

Ranger Events (for a list of upcoming events see elsewhere in the newsletter)

The Rangers have just held a very successful Tree ID event on the 29 May. We focused on the most common native and non-native species, giving people a good background in the basics of tree identification. This will allow them to confidently identify other species that were not discussed on the walk. For anyone interested, we will be holding the walk again next year at around the same time. Our next event in the Park is "Nature Detectives" on the 11 August. This is a children's event exploring Christchurch Park and learning about its wildlife. For more details of all Ranger events in the Borough, please contact me on the number printed below.

Environmental Education

This is the busiest time of the year for school trips to the Park and we have just held our first workshop there. We were teaching the children about environmental art by focusing on the artist Andy Goldsworthy. My colleague and I collected a variety of natural materials including reed, leaves, twigs and pinecones. The children spent the first half of the session learning about existing sculptures and the second creating their own works of art. It was great fun and very messy. The children gained knowledge about the different materials used, how things were made, and they talked about how they felt about the different sculptures we visited.

If anyone would like further information on any of the projects currently ongoing in the Park please do get in touch: email laura.whitfield@ipswich.gov.uk or telephone 01473 433993.

Ranger events in Christchurch Park this summer

All Ranger events in the Park begin at the Reg Driver Centre. There is a charge of £2 per child and £4 per adult, and booking in advance is essential either by telephoning 01473 433994 or by emailing park.rangers@ipswich.gov.uk. All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian and although dogs are welcome, they must be kept on a lead at all times. For more details, pick up a leaflet in the Reg Driver Centre.

Nature Detectives: Wednesday 11 August from 1pm – 3pm

Learn more about wildlife. Join the Rangers and explore the secret life of mini-beasts, scavenge like a squirrel and look for other exciting wildlife.

Build a Bugalow: Thursday 19 August from 1pm – 3pm

Using natural materials, build homes for insects that need somewhere to sleep in the winter.

Bat Walk: Wednesday: 25 August from 8pm – 10pm

Learn about British bats, how to identify them and where best to find them. Armed with their bat detectors the Rangers will take you on a guided walk around the Park. Long sleeves and insect repellent are advisable if you're prone to being bitten by midges!

Activities at the Mansion this summer

For more details on all these events, or to book where appropriate, please drop into the Mansion or telephone 01473 433691. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Teddy Bears' Picnic and Storytelling: Saturday 26 June

Why not treat your teddy bear to a day of fun at the Mansion? In partnership with the Ipswich Play Development Team, storytellers and children's authors will be on hand to keep you and your teddy friends entertained for hours (free, just drop in). Plus, to save your cuddly chum from having to "bear all", there's the chance to custom-make an outfit especially for your teddy. Bear fashion workshops sessions last 45-minutes at 11am, 12pm, 2pm and 3pm (£1.50 per child). The fashion workshops are popular so booking is essential.

Designer postcards: Saturday 26 June – Sunday 25 July

Be inspired by the wonderful Suffolk Coastal Deckchair exhibition and get creative. Design your very own deckchair themed postcard as a souvenir of your day. In partnership with St. Elizabeth Hospice. Free, suitable for all ages. Drop-in daily from 10am-5pm.

Guardians of the Museum "Relic Trail": Friday 23 July – Tuesday 31 August

Have you been watching the CBBC's *Relic Trail*? Pick up your quiz booklet and complete Agatha's challenges to see if you can become a "guardian of the museum". £1.00 per quiz.

Scrap Fashion Week: Monday 26 – Thursday 29 July

Be inspired by the costume collection and create your own stunning piece of scrap fashion. Materials and artist are will be on hand to inspire your design, and the workshop will end with a short fashion show in the Mansion's Great Hall. £3 per child. Workshops start at 10.30am, 12.30pm and 3pm and will last for 90 minutes. Suitable for ages 6+. These events are very popular so booking is essential.

A Victorian Kitchen: Monday 2 – Thursday 5 August

The kitchens are open and Mrs Fonnereau, the lady of the Mansion, is looking for new recruits. Put your servant skills to the test and try your hand at real butter-making, marzipan sweet-modelling and herb grinding. Do you have what it takes to become a servant at the Mansion? £2.00 per child. Sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 2pm and 3pm. Ages 5+ (adults and younger siblings can watch). These events are very popular so booking is essential.

Check out the Tudors: Monday 9 – Thursday 12 August

What a week we have in store! These sessions are perfect for families – you'll explore real and replica objects, play games and discover some fascinating facts about our Tudor ancestors. On Monday and Thursday, chat to Pol the Tudor dyer about life in the 16th Century (she might even teach you a dance!). Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 1st will be visiting on Tuesday and Wednesday, so be sure to come along and learn a dance to impress her.

This event and all activities are Free. There is something different happening each day, there's no need to book, just drop-in: "Check out the Tudors" sessions everyday at 11am, 12pm, 1.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. Pol the Tudor dyer will be at the Mansion on Monday and Thursday sessions at 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm. Dance workshops will be on Tuesday and Wednesday at 10.30am and 2.30pm. The Queen's visit will be on Tuesday and Wednesday between 11.30am - 3.30pm.

Candle-Making Workshops: Monday 16 – Thursday 19 August

Light up your life (or someone else's)! Make your very own beeswax candle to take home, learn about the history of candles and how they were used to provide light before we had electricity and find out how wax is made. All materials provided. £1.50 per child. Sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm and 2.30pm. Ages 3yrs+. Advance booking is essential.

Pirate Quest: Tuesday 24 – Thursday 26 August

Oo-arr me hearties! There's treasure in this here Mansion and it's up to you to follow in the footsteps of pirates from Ipswich to find it. There's also the chance to make your own pirate hat. Sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 2pm and 3pm. £2 per child. Ages 5+. A very popular event so booking is essential.

Dawn Chorus Walk in Christchurch Park, Saturday 1 May

Conditions were overcast but, thankfully, calm as twenty-two hardy souls gathered at the Reg Driver Centre at 4.30am for the first combined FoCP/IBC Rangers' Dawn Chorus Walk.

Robins and Blackbirds were already singing as we assembled and Gulls were calling as the first flecks of light started to appear in the eastern sky. We stopped to listen to the clear ringing tones of a Wren as we walked over to the Wilderness Pond where Canada Geese were already announcing their presence. Bats were flitting across the pond and over in the Lower Arboretum we could hear the distinctive tones of a Song Thrush; although the population of this once common species is perhaps starting to increase again, its numbers remain at a low ebb.

Two warbler species, Blackcap and Chiffchaff, were heard singing as we walked around the Wilderness Pond. Although both of these species have a wintering population in Britain, it is more likely that the individuals we heard would have wintered either in southern Europe or northern Africa. Ears strained to hear a Goldcrest, Britain's joint-smallest bird species, singing from the tops of trees growing on one of the Wilderness Pond's islands. Thankfully this individual was determined to be heard and continued singing for several minutes, so enabling all of us eventually to hear this very high-pitched song.

In the Wildlife Reserve (formerly the Bird Reserve) Reg Snook pointed out the nesting boxes that he had recently constructed and erected with the help of Laura Whitfield and several of the Friends – hopefully they will soon all be occupied. A Coal Tit, Britain's smallest tit, sang repeatedly from the top of a pine tree in the Reserve.

Out on the Park's open areas we noted Wood Pigeons and a Mistle Thrush ground feeding, and observed Jackdaws and Stock Doves amongst the older trees. On the Park's northern boundary we located a Jay and two Long-tailed Tits and heard singing Greenfinches, Chaffinches, Chiffchaff and Goldcrest. Goldfinches were regularly seen and heard in flight over the Park and towards the Children's Play Area we clearly heard a Nuthatch. After much effort, we also all obtained excellent views of the delightful Park resident which performed superbly for us in the branches of one of our wonderful veteran trees.

Our walk ended with a very welcome cup of tea and slice of cake at the Reg Driver Centre. Many thanks to all those who got up at a ludicrously early hour in order to attend this walk and enjoy the particular pleasures of the Park at dawn, and to the IBC Rangers who kindly provided their expertise and excellent refreshments.

Philip Murphy

Free tennis coaching in the Park

This summer, why not sign up for some free tennis coaching on the Park's courts? Running until 25 September, this coaching is a partnership between Team Ipswich and Ipswich Sports Club and will enable players of all ages to enhance their skills – or even pick up a racquet for the very first time. For all the details, or to register and book your place, go to their dedicated website (www.ipswichparktennis.co.uk), telephone Paul Sheldrake on 07521 284604 or email him at paul@chimneys.keme.co.uk. Throughout all their sessions a minimum of two of the courts will remain accessible to other members of the public for free recreational play.

IBC Entertainment Events in Christchurch Park this summer

As space is limited here, we are not able to give full details for each event listed below. For more information, ask at the Reg Driver Visitor Centre or telephone 01473 252435. For more details of all the Ip-art events or to book tickets (advance prices are usually cheaper than on the day), go to their website (www.ip-art.com) or telephone 01473 433100.

Sunday 20 June Suffolk Pride, 12 noon – 6pm

Every Wednesday from 28 July to 25 August there will be History Walks in the Park from 10.30am – 12 noon. Booking is essential (please call 01473 252435)

Saturday 28 – Monday 30 August Craft Fair

Sunday 29 August Half Marathon passing through the Park at approximately 9am

On most Fridays during August there will be Pony Rides, dates and times to be confirmed

The 2010 Ip-art Festival in Christchurch Park

Wednesday 23 June – Sunday 25 July Suffolk Coastal Deckchairs, (Mansion). Free

Thursday 1 July *Much Ado About Nothing* (theatre), 7.30pm, £5.50-£10 (plus family tickets)

Saturday 3 July Computer Games Graphics Workshop, 10am – 3pm (Reg Driver), £10

Saturday 3 July Global Rhythm, 12 noon – 6pm. A feast of world music. Free

Sunday 4 July Ipswich Music Day, 12 noon – 8pm. One of the largest, free, one-day music events in the country. Various venues around the Park

Sunday 4 July Colourdome, 12 noon – 5pm, £2 adult, £1 child

Tuesday 6 July *Great Expectations* (theatre), 7.30pm, £5.50-£10 plus family tickets

Thursday 8 July *Sex and the City* (15) (cinema), 8pm (gates open 7pm), £4-£7

Friday 9 July Big Friday – including *Diversity* and *Jedward*, 7.30pm (gates open 6pm) £24.50

Saturday 10 July *Up* (U) (cinema), 10am (gates open 9am), £3 or £10 family ticket

Saturday 10 July Last Night of the Proms (RPO), 7.45pm (gates open 4.30pm), £19.50-£40

Sunday 11 July Ipswich Mela, 12 noon – 6pm. Free

Tuesday 13 July *Simon Boccanegra* (Royal Opera), 7.30pm (gates open 6.30pm). Free

Friday 23 July The Summer Sessions – 80's Gig, 7.30pm (gates open 5pm), £15-£37.50

Saturday 24 July Jools Holland, 7.30pm (gates open 5pm), £15-£37.50

Sam's Notes

I remember writing at the beginning of last summer how the weather had been so good and how we were promised more of the same – it didn't turn out that way! So other than that opening sentence, no more on the subject (fingers crossed though...).

We are about to enter a very busy period for the Park: Music Day, theatre on the lawn, open air cinema and the Mela offer a wonderful variety from the Ip-Art programme. In addition we have Jools Holland, an 80's night, the X Factor stars and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra providing a range of entertainment. When you add to this the opera (*Simon Boccanegra*) and the Friends' five Brass on the Grass concerts we have a fantastic variety for everyone. Please see separate article for event dates. Obviously, with all these activities taking place we need to be watchful that the fabric of the Park remains intact.

The gardening staff have been working very hard to ensure that the Park is in a good state. This spring an extra effort has been made to clean the drains and paint the covers. We have also started two projects – one being the improvements to the Wildlife Reserve, including the removal of steps and fencing; the new entrance posts; new fencing alongside the Wilderness Pond and of course the bird boxes put up by the Friends. The second major project is the triangle area adjacent to the Mansion. This has now been resurfaced thanks to grants from the Ipswich Society and the Friends, and will be enhanced with new furniture in the coming weeks.

The Park now offers free tennis coaching – a joint project with Ipswich Sports Club and Tennis For Free. See the courts for more details.

I had better mention the Green Flag. It seems that we have scored quite highly for two years in a row. This means that this summer we will receive a mystery visit without any prior notification. Therefore, if you spot something in the Park that just isn't right, please do let us know – I hope that you would do this anyway. Leave us a message on 252435 or email me at sam.pollard@ipswich.gov.uk.

Want to hear about the Park as it happens?

We would like to share information with you as it happens, for example if there is a new event planned for the Park, a pathway that has to be closed, or perhaps a tree that has been blown over. We would like to email you with updates on the Park. If you would like this information to be sent direct to you, then please give us your email address (send to sam.pollard@ipswich.gov.uk). We promise that your email address will not be used for any other purpose, will not be passed onto others and will not be visible to others. Emails from us will be headed "Christchurch Park News" and will be sent out when we have something to share with you. We hope this new method of communication will enhance what we already do with our entrance boards and the Friends' own notice board outside the Reg Driver Centre.

Sam Pollard

To contact the Park Manager or for any other enquiries about the Park or Park events, please telephone the Reg Driver Centre on 01473 252435.

Membership

We warmly welcome the following new Friends:

Janice E Hough, David Riseborough, A P Andrews,
Mrs Pauline Lanchester, Crawford & Ruth Gillan, Sarah Norman

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)

The Will Shop

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

W. D. Coe Ltd

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

Orwell Veterinary Group

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

Scrutton Bland (Accountants)

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

Gilmour Piper and Associates

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

Articles for our next newsletter

The next newsletter will be sent to all members in the autumn. We are delighted to receive articles and letters from members, and anyone wishing to contribute should write to Richard Wilson either by post or email (please see the back page for contact details). We reserve the right to edit all submitted material for publication. The deadline for contributions is 1 September 2010.

FoCP COMMITTEE MEMBERS – 2010/11

(To year ending AGM – March 2011)

Chairman and
Vice-Chair 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

Committee Member and
Member of the Park
Management Board: Ian Hatton, 12B Fonnereau Road, Ipswich IP1 3JP
Phone: 01473 288538
Email: ianandfran@btinternet.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: Peter Howard-Dobson, 52 Westerfield Road, IP4 2UT
Phone: 01473 210494
Email: peter@hdhq.co.uk

ParkMobile Bookings

Please note our new ParkMobile arrangements: for all enquiries and bookings please contact the Reg Driver Centre on 01473 252435.