



AUTUMN NEWSLETTER – October 2014

Dear Friends,

We are absolutely delighted to announce the publication of not one but two new FoCP books. In addition to *Portrait of the Birds*, the third in Reg Snook's trilogy about wildlife in the Park, we have David Miller's magnificent *Ipswich Arboretum – A History and Celebration*. We are offering all members a free copy of both books (combined value £17.50), but to get them you MUST return the form (on the inside back cover) before our launch event on 29 November at the RDVC. You can of course purchase additional copies – they will make superb Christmas gifts! Further details on the books and the launch itself can be found later in the newsletter.

Talking of Christmas gifts, we have just instituted Lifetime Membership for a one-off payment of £100. If you would be interested in taking this up (either for yourself or another), and would like to have your donation make a real impact in the Park, please email our membership secretary robert.fairchild@ntlworld.com or go to our website www.focp.org.uk.

Talking of the website, committee members Corinna Hudson, Nicola Johnson and Emma Black have been working tirelessly to update it, produce a more informative membership leaflet and create a new logo. These will be unveiled in the coming days but we do encourage you to explore the website to find out more about the Friends than we can describe in this newsletter. Talking of which... As Friends not only of the Park but also of the environment, we have a duty to look at ways we can reduce our carbon footprint as well as our overheads. With this in mind we would like to encourage you to read our newsletter online rather than by receiving a paper copy by post. If you would like to have it delivered to your inbox rather than your postbox please email info@focp.org.uk, making sure to give us your name, address and email details.

Another Friend (and keen cyclist) Richard Stewart has contacted us to pass on some “excuses” given by cyclists breaking the Park's byelaws by cycling in those areas where it is not permitted: “I'm not going to hurt anyone”, “I'm going to be late for work”, “How can I get to the town centre without cycling through the Park?”, “Get a life”, “You wouldn't say that to me if I was a child”, “But I'm in a park!”, “You said that to me last week but I don't care” and perhaps the most inventive of all, “Laws are there to be broken. If it hadn't been for the suffragettes women wouldn't have got the vote.” This matter is on the agenda at almost all our committee meetings and, with the proposed development to the north of the town, it is not a problem that is likely to go away. A meeting with our MP Ben Gummer recently touched on this subject and we are looking to talk with members of the Council to see if there are better ways to manage the issue than with yellow signs chained to our veteran trees. It is time to take the issue off the agenda.

Richard Wilson

Events this autumn and winter in the Park and at the Mansion

FoCP bird walks – 9.30am on Saturday 25 October and Saturday 21 March

Join the authors of the FoCP's forthcoming *Portrait of the Birds* for this FREE walk to celebrate our rich and varied birdlife. The Park may be preparing for winter dormancy but it is still full of life, including avian visitors that we only see at this time of the year. Philip Murphy and Reg Snook will help us spot the birds and recognise their calls. Meet at the Reg Driver Centre at 9.30am and bring binoculars if you have them. Put a note in your diary for our spring bird walk at 9.30am on 21 March 2015.

Launch of two FoCP books: *Portrait of the Birds* and *Ipswich Arboretum – A History and Celebration* – Saturday 29 November from 12pm to 2pm at the Reg Driver Centre

Towards the end of this newsletter you can find out about how to order your free copies of our two terrific new FoCP books *Ipswich Arboretum – A History and Celebration* by former Arboretum resident David Miller and *Portrait of the Birds* by wildlife experts Reg Snook and Philip Murphy. We would be delighted to see you at the RDVC for the official launch when David and Reg will introduce and sign copies of their two books. There will be illustrations on display and some artworks for sale. Wine and soft drinks will be served and very limited parking is available at the car park inside the Bolton Lane entrance.

Spooky Fireworks in the Park – Saturday 1 November, gates open at 6pm

“Come if you dare” to the Scouts’ 43rd annual firework display which will combine fantastic fireworks with “Halloween themed spooky scarefest surprises around every corner”. Dress up for the scarefest procession through the Park (prizes for the best dressed) that forms up at the Reg Driver Centre at 7pm. Entertainment provided by Town 102, Heart and BBC Radio Suffolk. A funfair and an array of food including hot dogs, hog roasts, fish & chips, donuts and a licenced bar all available. Fireworks are at 8pm. Discount advance tickets are now on sale, priced at £3 for children (ages 5 -15 inclusive, under 5’s free) and £5 for adults. See www.ipswichfireworks.co.uk for full details.

Willow Lanterns – Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 October at the Mansion

Using willow and other craft materials, create your own beautiful lantern to brighten your doorstep on the dark evenings ahead. Sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm and 3pm. Booking is required by emailing museums@ipswich.gov.uk or by calling 01473 433691. Cost £3 per child.

The Big Draw Challenge – Daily until Saturday 1 November at the Mansion

Complete fun drawing challenges then hand your work in to feature in a mini exhibition during the half term holiday. Free. See www.cimuseums.org.uk for details.

Art in Focus: Women as Artists – 2pm on Sunday 2 November at the Mansion

Art Curator Emma Roodhouse presents an introduction to the female artists represented in the Ipswich Museums collections. Includes tea and cake provided by the Friends of Ipswich Museums. Booking required, please call 01473 433691. Cost £6 (£5 for members of FOIM).

Remembrance Day Service – 10.50am on Sunday 9 November at the War Memorial

In Conversation: Frances Spurling – 2pm on Saturday 15 November at the Mansion

Art historian, critic and biographer Frances Spalding discusses her work with psychoanalyst and poet Valerie Sinason. Free, but booking required. Please call 01473 433691.

Does Process Matter? – 2pm on Saturday 29 November at the Mansion

Panel discussion facilitated by artist and art therapist Emma Cameron, with artists Molly Thomson, Jane Frederick, Claudia Bose, Hayley Field and Jacqueline Utlej. Free, but booking required. Please call 01473 433691.

Victorian Christmas – 10am to 4pm on Sunday 14 December at the Mansion

Explore the Mansion in all its Christmas glory in this full day of family fun! Meet Victorian characters, learn traditional dances, enjoy carols by Ipswich Choral Society and make simple crafts to take home. Free entry though a small charge for optional craft activities. Meet Father Christmas and receive a gift (£3.50 per child). Drop in, no need to book.

Printing Workshops – Thursday 19 and Friday 20 February 2015 at the Mansion

Learn more about John Constable's work by designing and creating your own printed landscape to take home. All materials provided. Sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm and 3pm. Cost £3 per child. Booking required by emailing museums@ipswich.gov.uk or by calling 01473 433691.

Meet John Constable – Friday 20 February 2015 at the Mansion

Meet young artist John Constable, find out about his life, how hard he has worked to become an artist, and about his hopes for his future career. Drop-in at 10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2pm and 3pm. Free event.

Days with Dad: Mother's Day Gifts – Saturday 7 March 2015 at the Mansion

Make mum a special Mother's Day present – choose smaller individual items like bracelets or candles to decorate or create a whole family gift like a willow lantern or ceramic plate. Sessions at 10.30am to 12.30pm or 1.30pm to 3.30pm. Cost £5 per family (up to four children). Booking advisable by emailing museums@ipswich.gov.uk or by calling 01473 433691.

Table Tennis

We would very much like to thank Lorna and Rob of Claydon Architectural Metalwork (www.cam-ltd.co.uk/about.html) for repairing and reinforcing, free of charge, one of the table tennis nets after it was damaged by vandals. The net is now back in place and both tables will be available for play (weather permitting) throughout the winter months.

Save our Parks!

A petition has been created by the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces who are calling for your support. They say that "although parks are of a generally good standard now, with more local authority cuts to come we are at risk of slipping into the same level of crisis that hit parks in the 1980's and 1990's. This petition is a call to action for Government to put parks and green spaces back on the political agenda. There is now plenty of evidence showing how vital green space is to our health and wellbeing, with many NHS Trusts using it as part of rehabilitation processes. We need everyone to support and sign this important petition to protect our parks."

If you would like to find out more about how the Federation is looking to protect and invest in the UK's public green spaces, visit their website:

www.change.org/p/save-our-parks-protect-and-invest-in-the-uk-s-public-green-space

Paul Sherman snaps some Cormorants



Love them or loathe them, cormorants are now a feature of our ponds, and wildlife photographer Paul Sherman has recently taken an extraordinary series of photos of them. First is this picture of a juvenile trapped in what looked like a fishing net that someone had dumped into the Round Pond. The bird was in obvious distress but settled slightly once it was able to get its head above water. Despite occasional attempts to free itself it was trapped for about 20 minutes. A female bystander wanted to go in and help, but Paul persuaded her of the dangers of both the pond and the distressed bird and she reluctantly stayed on dry land. The RSPCA was called, but before anyone arrived the cormorant used its sharp

beak to break free. It appeared unharmed and after drying its wings it flew off to the Wilderness Pond but returned again to fish in the Round Pond an hour later.

This was actually the second time that Paul had seen a cormorant caught in the net in just a couple of weeks and so he went back a few days later to try to get it out of the pond. Armed only with 50ft of string and a bunch of old paperclips attached to a metal ring for weight he managed to pull out (at only the fifth attempt...) what looks like a home-made net perhaps intended to unlawfully trawl the pond for goldfish.



The picture to the right shows the cormorant taking revenge! This amazing photograph was taken on 9 August and shows one of the juvenile cormorants swimming away with a sign asking people not to feed the ducks!

Paul has amassed some wonderful wildlife photos in the Park and this series included capturing a Mallard duck with a fish in its mouth as a result of the cormorants leaving dead ones on the pond's surface.

More of Paul's images can be seen at: www.flickr.com/people/pes96.



Richard Wilson with thanks to Paul Sherman (whose images are copyright)

FoCP Bat Walk – Friday 5 September

Why do so many people love bats, and are those people themselves simply 'batty'? The FoCP bat walk was well advertised but would you believe it, 100 bat lovers turned up! Given that bats are perhaps not the prettiest of mammals (their features are really quite ugly), I asked several people why they loved bats so much: most of them had no idea...

But there is no denying their fascination. Our advertising, together with a warm evening, aided the large turnout: it was the most number of people ever to attend one of our nature walks. It was particularly nice to see so many family groups. Several of the children said their interest in bats was the direct result of watching vampire programmes on TV and film, especially the *Twilight* series. We spotted no vampires on our walk.

Once again, our leaders were Mark Smith and Sue Hooten of the Suffolk Bat Group. Mark briefed us on bat life, on what we were likely to see and, more especially, what bats we were likely to hear. For this purpose he handed out several bat detectors. A shock even to our expert leaders was the first bat to be heard – a Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), one of our largest bats. As the evening was not yet dark, many of us caught a glimpse of this exciting mammal.

We headed north towards the ice-cream kiosk with the children becoming quite excited by the noises made by Pipistrelle bats emanating from their detectors. Our walk continued through the Wildlife Reserve and down to the Round Pond. The seasoned bat walkers knew exactly what to expect in this area and as last year the finale was breath-taking. With the water and sky over of the Round Pond illuminated by torches, bat watching became even more thrilling. As the bats chased insects over the water, our bat detectors were constantly clicking with their sonar calls. Grey shapes flitted in and out of the torchlight beams with many bats coming so close to us that it seemed possible to reach out and touch them.

Once again, on behalf of the FoCP, I would like to thank Mark and Sue for sharing their expertise, generosity of time and enthusiasm with the bat walkers and especially the youngsters. An added bonus to the proceedings was the return that very morning of "our" tawny owl Mabel to her roost. Many of the bat walkers were introduced to this other very special winged creature.

Reg Snook

After analysing recorded data from the detectors, Sue Hooten adds: "We first saw a Noctule bat flying high over our heads whilst we were outside the Reg Driver Centre. This woodland bat may well be roosting in trees in the Park, as they often use old woodpecker holes. As we walked around, we heard both Soprano and Common Pipistrelles but also a Serotine bat! This is another large bat which feeds over parkland on moths and beetles. [The Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) is one of the UK's largest bats but listed by the Bat Conservation Trust as uncommon – numbers may be as low as 15,000 nationally, mainly south of a line drawn from The Wash to parts of South Wales.]

The Round Pond produced a wonderful finale with 3 species in a feeding frenzy – Soprano, Common and Nathusius' Pipistrelles. Records of Nathusius' have been increasing nationally in recent years and it is now known to be widespread but still rare [it was first recorded in Great Britain in the Shetland Islands in 1940 and has only been known to breed in the UK since the 1990's]. Mark recorded it in the Park back in April so it may well be breeding here too or just passing through at each end of the season – maybe we should check in the summer?"

Will we soon be feeding garlic to our trees?

We could soon be injecting garlic into the Parks' veteran trees to protect them from various serious diseases such as acute oak decline, bleeding canker in horse chestnuts and ash dieback. The treatment, which is being trialled under licence from the government, may not be practical for large areas of woodland but might be suitable for "special" trees such as the veteran trees in our Park.

The trees are injected with a garlic solution containing high levels of allicin. This appears to kill the *chalara fraxinea* fungus that causes ash dieback, and has also proved effective in 350 trees suffering from various ailments that have received the treatment.

Julian Roughton from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust is quoted as saying that as with Dutch elm disease, ash dieback and bleeding canker will probably need to run their course, "but if it turns out that this is effective at controlling individual trees, it does give landowners and householders with very special trees the opportunity to safeguard those. There is still an 'if' here, because although there have been positive results it obviously is still early days, so we would be wary of recommending it without greater evidence of effectiveness and levels of success. But it's certainly interesting."

In the meantime, tree consultant Jonathan Cocking who is helping develop the treatment has said that he would be willing to include Suffolk trees in the project. We will be speaking to Alan and his team about the possibility of trialing the treatment in Christchurch Park, but anyone who would like to be part of the project can email Jonathan at jon@jcaac.com.

Arachnophobic? Look away now...

A fascinating new app for android and apple products has been launched by ecologists at the Society of Biology to aid identification of twelve of the common species of spiders that have been invading our homes and gardens over the past few weeks. Fully illustrated with, depending on your point of view, fascinating or terrifying close up images, *Spider in Da House* has sections on "Why spiders are important" and "Sexing spiders" (not something I ever thought I would be doing...) as well as the spider identification pages.

Autumn, from August until December, is the mating season for spiders, and most of the spiders we see in our houses are males on the search of a "good time". Despite their occasionally challenging appearance (the hairy *Tegenaria* is one of my least favourite...), spiders really do help to dispose of huge numbers of flies and other invertebrates. With the invasion underway, what better time to get better acquainted with our close neighbours and friends?

New members

We are thrilled to now have 16 corporate members including recent subscribers Landex Living and The Ipswich & Suffolk Club. The logos of all our corporate friends can be found on the back page of the newsletter. We are also delighted to welcome the following new household members: Joe & Christine Orr, Peter Quirk, Paul & Mollin Delve, Kimberly Kuzvinzwa, John & Pam Blatchly, Teresa & Kevin Marrable, Ms D. Duell & Ms E. Allen, Richard & Liz Howse, Liz Cutting, Richard & Gill Wilkins.

Remembering the Great Storm



Friday, 16 October 1987. JoAnne, our three boys and I were then living at 28 Park Road. My day started at 4.50am as I had a 25 minute walk in the dark to the station for the 6.25am to Liverpool Street. The sunny Monday to Wednesday and then a damp Thursday gave no clue as to what was about to happen.

It was rather windy outside with objects flying around in the dark when I woke up that morning. There were branches down in Park Road; but it was the tree coming down right across Park Road, taking a slice out of the brick wall at the Bishop's House, that really shook me up. In the days before mobile phones I thought I'd better report the fallen tree at the police station in Civic Drive and I seem to remember part of another tree falling onto Henley Road and then being blown over on Civic Drive. Of course there were no trains that day so I walked home. By then another tree had come down across Park Road at Norwood but soon after I arrived back home, the wind eased. It wasn't long before the howl of the wind was replaced by the whine of chainsaws.



Our greenhouses had been stripped of their glass, two fruit trees had been flattened and a giant Park tree had crashed into the lower half of our garden flattening the metal fence. As David Miller outlines in his new FoCP book on the Arboretum, only one of the Park's seven Monkey Puzzle trees was left standing. The last Elm tree in the Park that had been carefully nursed against Dutch Elm disease was uprooted. A survey on 1 November reported that 187 trees had come down in Christchurch Park, 40 in the Upper Arboretum and eight in the Lower Arboretum, accounting for 22% of the 1,069 trees that fell in Ipswich Parks that morning. The high toll may have been due to the Indian summer and the rain the day before.

The stock markets collapsed the following week but that was man-made, as was the flint spear-head I found buried in the root of the uprooted pear tree in the garden, which I keep as a remainder of that extraordinary day.

Rowell Bell

Visit to the Mayor's Parlour on a hot 16 July 2014

Five members of Friends took tea with his worship the Mayor and the Mayoress, Councillor Bill and Mrs Barbara Quinton, in the Mayor's Parlour, which for those who have not been before, is situated on the floor immediately above Waitrose Express and not in the Town Hall itself.

We were met by Town Sergeant Andrew Beal and escorted to the Mayor's suite, where we were welcomed. We enjoyed tea and biscuits whilst hearing what their worships had been doing in their official capacity recently. After tea Andrew told us about the history behind many of the works of art and treasures on display. This included our being allowed to handle (with gloves on) some of the town's treasures, for example the ceremonial mace which is hallmarked 1656 and the Town's seal which dates back to 1200.



One side of the seal portrays a ship reminding us of what helped Ipswich become so wealthy, and the reverse portrays the tallest building in Ipswich at the time, which was what we know of today as St. Mary-le-Tower. Incidentally, that church had a spire up to February 1661 when a hurricane blew it down, so the picture of Ipswich on the wall of the Reg Driver Centre as imagined in the Middle Ages is incomplete. Speede's map of 1610 exaggerates the height of the spire but it did have one.



After being shown the portraits, paintings, certificates, awards and gifts to the Corporation from all over the world, it was time for a group photo. We then made a group effort to photograph a painting of what is now the Arboretum looking down towards the town by Robert Burrows for the soon to be published FoCP book by David Miller. The Town Sergeant was balanced precariously on a chair while the Mayor and Mayoress opened the heavy curtains to allow the appropriate amount of daylight in. Friends promised a complimentary copy of the new Arboretum for their efforts.

Just between ourselves, I later found the Burrows painting *Orwell from Bridle Way, Ipswich* on the

www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings website, which Ipswich Borough Council are kindly allowing us to reproduce in the book. There are two other fine Burrows paintings of Christchurch Park in the collection of Colchester and Ipswich Museums.

It just remains to say that we were very grateful for the hospitality and tour of the reception rooms and for an open invitation for Friends to visit again. Ipswich is very fortunate to have Bill and Barbara as the town's ambassadors this year, and Andrew as Town Sergeant and historian.

Rowell Bell

Park Manager's Report

As many will have seen either in the Park itself or in the local press, we have recently had to deal with a challenging drainage collapse at the southern end of the Wilderness Pond. Using a miniature camera a drainage company reported that the pipe leading to the waterfall in the Peace Garden had flattened reducing the flow and leading to some localised flooding. We had to close off the footpath until a new pipe was installed, but the work has now been completed.



We are sorry to report that the Souvenir D'Anne Frank rose that was planted at a ceremony on Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2012 appears to have been stolen. The original rose was chosen as the flower to be dedicated to Anne's memory by her father Otto, and was sent as a gift to a friend in Japan. Its offspring have since been planted in towns and cities across the world and it has become a symbol of peace and reconciliation. We are looking to sourcing a replacement.

The return of the Mayors' plaques is in the final stages with agreement awaited from the Portfolio Holder. The plaques will soon be positioned in chronological order along the Mayors Walk thanks to the FoCP and a grant from the Ipswich Society.

Rough Sleepers have been a problem this year with several recent reports relating to the Upper Arboretum and the Cabman's Shelter. The authorities are made aware as soon as these cases are known and are working to assist the individuals in question.

The summer display of annual bedding plants has been removed to make way for the spring display which will be planted later in October.

Sadly the Westerfield Road toilets remain closed whilst work to restore the water supply continues. This is proving a difficult problem requiring substantial digging in the area.

We have yet to receive the Green Flag judge's comments from this year's secret visit.

Rats have been a problem particularly by the Wilderness Pond. The Pest Control Officer is exploring using a product endorsed by the Barn Owl Trust that consists of biodegradable pellets. Containing no poisonous chemicals, these pellets do not provide the secondary risks of conventional rodenticides and pose no threat to humans, dogs or birds.

We have been working closely with the Friends and others to create a wonderful new interpretation board for the Orchard. Reg Snook has provided some superb pictures and we hope that the sign, sponsored by Landex Living, will be put up in the very near future.

Alan Gilbert, Area Supervisor, tel 01473 432473, email alan.gilbert@ipswich.gov.uk



The Friends of Christchurch Park announce the publication of two new books this autumn

Portrait of the Birds, 50 Years of Birdlife in Christchurch Park is the last in the *Portrait* trilogy by local author, artist and wildlife expert Reg Snook, this time in collaboration with avian authority Philip Murphy. It describes in beautifully illustrated detail the birds we have cherished or that have even been spotted fleetingly flying over the Park.

Reg and Philip have an extraordinary body of bird records on which they build a narrative that celebrates new arrivals as well as mourning those species that no longer

grace our Park. The book is packed with lovely paintings and sketches, and includes comprehensive lists of birds you might see on a visit to Christchurch Park.



Ipswich Arboretum – A History and Celebration is a magnificent book by former Arboretum Lodge resident David Miller whose father was for many years Head Gardener in the Upper Arboretum. David has meticulously researched the story of Ipswich's first public park and illustrates it with historic images and postcards, sketches by award-winning artist Richard Allen and stunning wildlife and arboricultural photographs taken by fellow FoCP member Liz Cutting. The book also contains a Tree Trail that highlights 100 fabulous individual specimens in the Arboretum.

Both books are being launched at a Friends' event to be held at the Reg Driver Centre from 12pm to 2pm on Saturday, 29 November. David and Reg will introduce and sign copies, there will be illustrations from both books on display and some artworks for sale. Wine and soft drinks will be served and limited parking will be available inside the Bolton Lane gates.



We are very pleased to be making members a very special offer of one FREE signed copy of each book per household.



There is only one free copy of each book per membership address (corporate members are included) and this is a time-limited offer: we must receive your form by 29 November 2014. No free or reduced price copies will be available after that date.

There are two ways to claim your free books: you can **EITHER** attend the launch at the Reg Driver Centre on Saturday 29 November (please remember to bring the form below with you) **OR** post the form to us. Books for delivery will be sent out in the week following the launch.

Proceeds from the sale of the books will go towards helping wildlife projects in areas of the Park and the Arboretum and they will make wonderful Christmas gifts. Additional copies can be ordered now for collection at the launch or delivery soon after at the following prices:

Portrait of the Birds (RRP £7.50) will be on sale at the special pre-publication price of **£5**
Portrait of a Park and **Portrait of an Owl** (RRP £7.50 each) will also be available at **£5**
A set of all 3 titles in the *Portrait* series (**Portrait of a Park**, **Portrait of an Owl** and **Portrait of the Birds** (RRP £22.50) will cost **£13**

Ipswich Arboretum - A History and Celebration (RRP £10) will be on sale at the special pre-publication price of **£7.50**

Postage and packing is free for your free copies but thereafter there is a handling charge of £1 for 1 book, £2 for 2 books, £3 for 3 books etc. for orders not collected. This will not fully cover our costs but will help defray expenses. It would aid us, and reduce our costs, if you were able to collect particularly large orders from the RDVC on Saturday 29 November.

Please detach this form and keep a record of your order

Please send me my one free copy of **Portrait of the Birds**

☐

Please send me my one free copy of **Ipswich Arboretum**

☐

I wish to buy.....additional copies of **Portrait of the Birds** at £5 per copy Total £.....

I wish to buy.....sets of the **Portrait** series at £13 per set Total £.....

I wish to buy.....additional copies of **Ipswich Arboretum** at £7.50 per copy Total £.....

Handling fee: I include £.....for my.....additional copies (£1 per book, **free copies are free**)

Cheques should be made payable to The Friends of Christchurch Park ... **TOTAL £.....**

Name:

Address:

Please ensure that you have completed ALL relevant sections, print your name and address clearly and return the form by 29 November to:

FoCP Book Offer, 5 Manor Road, Ipswich, IP4 2UX



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