



Spring Newsletter | June 2021



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Our thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue.

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## Welcome

*It's been several months since the Friends produced a newsletter and when the Spring/Summer 2020 edition appeared who would have thought that over eight months later we would still be in some form of lockdown, albeit with some restrictions easing?*

Sadly every event the Friends had planned for last year, the 125th anniversary of Christchurch Park, had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. Normally we would put on several bird and bat walks and the Brass on the Grass concerts. Last year we ran nothing.

This year we find ourselves in a very similar position. We would very much like to hold our usual events, but it is very difficult to plan anything. Unfortunately, the spring bird walks could not take place given the lockdown restrictions. We are hopeful that we might be able to hold some Brass on the Grass concerts in the summer, the bands are extremely keen, but a final decision can't be made until later. We are more optimistic about the autumn bat and bird walks. But it really is a matter of waiting to see if any of these are possible. One of the few things we were able to achieve this year was to get double yellow lines painted by the gates on Park Road. Thanks are due to Suffolk County Council's Highways team for taking on board our concerns about dangerous parking here in the past.

Right: The Green Flag Award – Peter Gray and Robbie Pankhurst from the Park Team.



Despite the lack of events, both those run by the Friends and those run by the Borough Council, the Park has probably had more visitors than ever. Lockdowns have seen so many come to the Park to exercise and take a break from life at home. This winter it has been especially busy as the large muddy expanses around the entrance gates testify. The new playground which opened in the summer has proved extremely popular and provided a much-needed play space for the Park's younger visitors.

It was marvellous to learn last summer that the Park secured yet another Green Flag award. This is a worthy acknowledgement of the Park staff's hard work in the most difficult of years.

Readers of the East Anglian Daily Times may have seen that two out of the seven biggest, best and most iconic trees in the county are located in the Park. These were the Shakespearean Memorial Tree Ipswich – a blue atlas cedar planted in 1864 to mark the 300th anniversary of William Shakespeare's birthday,

and a six-hundred-year-old English yew, which stood there since Henry V's reign.

Without doubt the highlight of the year in the Park was the visit of the BBC's Antiques Roadshow. So many have remarked just how fabulous the Park looked when the programme appeared on television back in January. Rowell Bell, former Treasurer of the Friends, has written about his experience at the event on page 6. A second Antiques Roadshow, a continuation of the one filmed in the Park, has been aired more recently.

We are hoping that later in the year our revamped website will be up and running and also that restrictions will be eased so that we will be able to hold our long postponed annual general meeting.

With no events and no expenditure last year, the Friends' funds are very healthy as the Treasurer reports on page 21. We decided to post recent editions of the newsletter as we had the funds to do it. This made things so much easier, especially given the







circumstances. We hope to hold a committee meeting sometime soon to allocate our remaining, and not insignificant funds, to support work in the Park. Last time around we funded bat boxes, equipment in the outside gym, bat boxes and wildflower seeds. If anyone has any thoughts or ideas about what we might fund in the future, do please get in touch.

My sincere thanks to all those who have contributed to this newsletter. It has not been possible to produce three editions each year during the pandemic, but hopefully we can get back to our normal routine shortly. Special thanks are due to Clare Thornhill of FliDesign who works her magic on the articles and without her help we simply couldn't produce the newsletter

This has been a very bleak and very tough winter, but at least spring is here and the Park is bursting with life. The daffodils are blooming; the blossom is appearing and nature is doing its best to cheer us all up.

And here's hoping for a fine summer and at least a few Friends' events to bring back a bit of normality and fun.

**Peter Gray**

Chair – Friends of Christchurch Park

Please let us know what you think of our newsletter and if you have anything you would like included in the next issue call the Reg Driver Centre: **01473 433980** or visit us online at: **twitter @christchurchpk** or **facebook@christchurchParkIpswich**

## PARK UPDATE from the Park Team

It's been a busy time for the Park Team and here are some of the tasks that they have been focusing on over the past few weeks and some of the upcoming highlights this spring:

- 1 the winter bedding is still out and looking good
- 2 the fountain is in place on the Round Pond operational and looking good.
- 3 the spring bulbs have come through and are bursting into flower adding a splash of colour.
- 4 grass cutting is starting
- 5 the fencing around adult exercise equipment has been removed.
- 6 the tennis courts have re-opened.

## The Owl is Out

**Matilda/Mabel has been pulling in the crowds this winter as evidenced by the increasingly worn patch of grass around 'her' tree.**

It is marvellous how the Tawny Owl is such a huge attraction. And we are lucky she has chosen such a prominent place to spend so much of her time. It is rare for Tawny Owls to be seen so easily during the morning and late afternoon.

Earlier in the year, however, she briefly moved to an even more open and observable perch. Ordinarily she can be found at the top of her hole in the tree trunk, however she appeared outside on a neighbouring branch for several successive days exciting her many fans and drawing an even larger throng around her.

So what is the reason for this new seating position? According to our expert ornithologists there are three possible reasons:

- she is quite simply behaving differently and decided to adopt a new more visible perch for some reason or other; or
- this is not Matilda/Mabel but another female; or
- it is not Matilda/Mabel and not even another female, but instead is a male.

*An earlier photo of Matilda taken a few winters ago.*







## BBC Antiques Roadshow at Christchurch Park – Rowell Bell's Insider view

The drone did us proud – first the rooftops of Christchurch Mansion, then central Ipswich followed by the Round Pond with the fountain in all its glory. Then there were cameo shots of couples and family groups. Behind the scenes make-up artists were mopping up the moisture from the experts' brows on this unusually warm mid September weekend.

The experts had dressed for visual impact but not for comfort. I on the other hand was cool under my Michael Portillo Fedora courtesy of Coes and the AR Umbrella. Fiona Bruce, cool and calm in her summer dress, covered our town's history from its early days to recent times referring to toys dredged up from the Round Pond in 2003 and the Ipswich Martyrs.

Fast forward and one hour's viewing on 17th January encapsulated the extraordinary time

and effort it took the production and editing teams. "UNSCRIPTED PRODUCTIONS" says it all. I watched as scripts were created between the owners and experts then fine-tuned by the producer.

The experts had an advantage as they knew in advance what objects were coming along. The invited owner would have time to think about the object's history from their viewpoint.



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What they were not prepared for was the release of bottled up emotions which bring an object to life and then for it to be cherished for generations, regardless of value, or sold.

So, why was I here, answering the call with Friends of Ipswich Museum's Rent a Crowd, despite saying "Never Again", well, here goes:

**The first time** thirty odd years ago I queued for half a day at **Heveningham Hall** with an oil portrait valued for £800 for insurance. Snubbed by Hugh Scully when he saw it, no not a pot Hugh, an expert later confirmed the Continental artist and said £800 was about right. The kids were not amused.

**The second time** about 15 years ago I queued with a Jacobite glass that had been professionally valued for probate in 1991 and IHT paid thereon, at the **Ipswich Corn Exchange**, where I was told the glass was mid 18th century, but the butterfly etching was a Victorian addition, a fake, thanks Andy.

**My third attempt** was at **Helmingham Hall** on a very hot 31 August 2017. So much for the flyer's "Buzz of Anticipation": the queues were long and irritable – car parking, antique classification, silver and ceramics for me, and of course Portaloo and catering queues. I had a box with six items of silver and one restored Prattware lioness. One hour into the silver queue a steward said that the expert was breaking for lunch and then filming, back in 90 minutes. So off we went to the back of the ceramics queue. An hour later I produced my lioness, and we went to VIP status; biscuits and tea with the experts in the stable block with non-queue toilets.

So, there I was towards dusk after full day queuing, hanging around with not much to drink, then in front of the TV camera enthusiastically saying that I liked my 1820s lioness more after being told by Fergus it was unbroken and worth £800 to £1,200! Earlier Fergus asked me how much I thought it was worth and I replied £1,000 probate value.

My donor, who had broken it, had not realised her late husband had replaced not repaired it! **My two minutes of fame on AR, Sunday 3rd June 2018.**

Yes Fiona, it was "a memorable day!" There was a price to pay, a splitting headache and after sitting a bit, I had terrible cramps in my legs. Despite my pain I tottered into the garden as daughter-in-law Natalie needed dahlias for her Antiques Centre in Woodbridge as Celebrity Antiques Roadtrip were filming at her shop the next day. The dahlias were seen on TV as the camera scanned the shop!

**The Link to the current filming** As a VIP at Helmingham Hall I was allowed to queue-jump back at the silver expert, stirring more angst in the late afternoon queue, despite assurances that I'd be brief as I was about to

be filmed. Alastair took a quick look, declared that the Trompe L'Oeil Russian jug was the finest piece he had seen all day and that the EUR cheroot case belonged in a museum and it was such a pity that he had his TV slots filled...

**Fast forward to 15 September 2020**, I arrived at the appointed hour at the fenced off area to have my temperature taken and be matched against list of invitees, with a man bag containing the two small above mentioned items of silver only to find that there was no silver specialist there and no show and tell.

So I had to nurse two small articles of silver during the filming, which didn't interest them, but that was nothing compared with my dear friend Erica Burrows who had to carry around a pound and a half of lead in her handbag – a plumb bob.



Rowell, Robert and Sylvia, past and present members of the Friends' Committee, taking a break during filming.

We were allocated seating around red AR umbrellas, while we awaited to take our measured places six feet apart. I thought I had dressed for the part and behaved myself quite well, although the editor's scissors left one fleeting glimpse of yours truly.

There were so few of us invited guests that some of the BBC's production team posed too; Robert and I spotted synchronised threesome poses by the make-up team! Full marks go to the producers and I will take you through one example, which Erica refers to as the Unfinished Chinese Vase in her article in Friends of Ipswich Museum's Autumn newsletter.

- There it was, a white vase with two handles, in the centre with owner at one side and the expert with a beautiful accent at the other, the owner cried when told the value was £30k-50k, and I guess crying a lot more when advised if finished it would be worth £2,000,000 or something like that. As for us, we were clapping and looking excited for the owner, from our assigned spots.
- 'Cut!' said the producer who then advised on the finer points on the rapport between them and the revised 'script' was shot again.
- So the lady was crying and we were clapping and looking excited when "Cut!" yelled the producer as an emergency vehicle blared away as it shot by in St Margaret's Street, ruining the take.
- And as the lady continued to cry and we continued to clap and look happy for her we heard "Cut!" as a flying V formation geese honked, ruining the take.

Meanwhile, two other sets of crews were filming their owner/object/expert scenarios, one up by the Mansion, another behind St Margaret's churchyard and another in the Wolsey Gardens, where Emma and Fiona were joined by Gainsborough and Constable, care of Bob, my boss at the Museum.

Electric vehicles were shuttling folk to the car parking reserve near an unperturbed Mabel. I did have an informal chat with one or two experts. And, when I had the temerity to hand over a copy of Friends of Christchurch Park newsletter and pointed out the near bombing miss to the Battle of Britain Expert I was told it was a JU 88 that had the near miss to the mansion not the JU 87 as stated in the article.

So as the BBC worked, we relaxed and contemplated just how much effort and expertise is involved in producing a couple of episodes of the programme. Well done the BBC, Ipswich Borough Council events staff, Museum and Park staff and volunteers.



## A Nightingale in the Park

by Richard Stewart



'And a nightingale sang in Berkeley Square' according to the well-known song. Many think it was a robin but given recent increased knowledge of how many bird species pass through London it could have been possibly pausing for a rest or singing to hopefully attract a mate.

What has this got to do with Christchurch Park? Well, on April 19th 2020 Stuart Grimwade heard one singing from scrub near Snow Hill and both Reg Snook and Philip Murphy also heard it. It presumably didn't breed as the last singing record I am aware of was 21st April. There is suitable deep scrub but it either didn't attract a mate or found people and dogs too close. It could however have been the one heard on land at the end of Picton Avenue, less than a mile away. This was

heard singing through to the last week of May, though with a reduced repertoire, and I also heard its warning calls, suggestive of nesting. These were from extensive scrub well away from a footpath used by many dogwalkers.

Could one actually return to breed in the park? I'll leave the last words to Reg Snook, on page 62 of his book 'Portrait Of The Birds': 'An excellent, but perhaps unlikely proposal, would be to have a large protected area of scrub available in the park which might, just might, attract a pair of common whitethroats and, who knows, even a pair of nightingales-dream on!'

**Do see Philip Murphy's birding highlights on page 18 for more on this sighting, or should it be 'hearing'?**





# A Living Fossil after the Great Storm in 1987

by Erika Bülow-Osborne

## **Araucaria araucana, Chilean Pinetree**

In 1810, an English expedition under Captain George Vancouver and the botanist Archibald Menzies, had the order to search for navigable rivers in Chile along the Pacific Coast. The expedition lasted for nearly four and a half years and important repairs needed to be undertaken at the harbour of Valparaiso.

The Chilean Vice-King invited the two important visitors for a festive dinner and there were offered unknown nuts for the dessert. Instead of eating them, Archibald Menzies hid them and planted the seeds on their return voyage so that there were seedlings when they eventually arrived home again. Menzies presented the precious new Chilean Pinetree plants to Sir Joseph Banks, the Royal Garden Expert at Kew Gardens of King George III.

A few decades later these Chilean Pinetrees became sought after specimens. England in the late nineteenth century had a very courageous gardener in Exeter, James Veitch, who asked William Lobb who worked in the his nurseries, to collect as many nuts from the new plants as possible and by 1884 his garden centre offered presentable new young trees, which were distributed far and wide in England and abroad.

In Christchurch Park there used to be seven mature (ancient) *araucaria araucana* trees,

but six of them were destroyed during the Great Storm in 1987. When David Miller became Chairman of the Friends he felt especially close to the loss of so many trees as he had grown up in the house in the Upper Arboretum. In his book on the Arboreta, the Upper and Lower parts, he described movingly how there was a total destruction of a Holm Oak. Some trees lost all branches when other trees crashed on to them, but fortunately his favourites, the Deodar and Wellingtonia recovered after a few years.

In young *Araucaria araucana* trees the branches stay put, spiralling down to the ground. Arms stretched out and at the end there is a cone with about 200 seeds, rich in carbohydrates and proteins.

It is important to stress the importance of the last remaining *Araucaria Araucana* 'fossil' a few steps away from the small gate in Henley Road, surrounded by bushes and younger trees. As a mature tree it has lost its branches lower down, so that only a small crown of short branches, some with gorgeous looking cones, are seen high up.

On my frequent visits to the Park I watch changes over the years in the young trees. The number of young and healthy trees is a wonderful sight and David Miller was the driving force for this.

My Scherenschnitte, scissor cuts, are showing parts of the bark and underlying rind, the male and female cones.



*Araucaria araucana Chilean Pinetree*  
*Chilensis Araucaria*  
 Scherenschnitt  
 Erika Bülow-Osborne  
 November 2020

# The way we were...

by Reg Snook

It is strange how over one's lifetime the fortunes of certain species of bird have changed dramatically. I have mentioned before how house sparrows were once so common that we boys would be paid a tanner (6d) or so to trap them.

They were a nuisance, or so I was told. What they actually did that offended my seniors, I cannot remember other than they ate the corn that Uncle Bert put out for his racing pigeons. I had a friend called 'Kipper' (needless to say that his surname was Herring). Kipper's Dad, just like Uncle Bert, kept various species of dove, including pigeons. So many of my neighbours had pigeon lofts. Kipper and his dad would forage the country lanes for turtle dove nests from which they collected the eggs and placed them under similar aviary doves to hatch. I think the fancy doves were Diamond doves or a similar species. The turtle doves would subsequently hatch and soon Kipper's Dad would build up a collection of Turtle Doves. No one thought badly of Mr Herring – these things were normal in my youth. In the following years, the turtle doves were laying their own eggs and bringing up their own youngsters. Of course, turtle doves are summer visitors but spending the winter here in an aviary did not seem to affect them. Ironically, when Collared Doves began to spread into this country from eastern Europe in the mid 1950s, Mr Herring decided to get rid of his turtle doves in favour of these exciting new arrivals. So the Herring family began hunting for collared doves' eggs. If only

they had known that one day collared doves would become very common and that the turtle doves they got rid of would be nearly extinct.

As a school boy I would stray far from my home on the Priory Heath Estate searching for all kinds of nature. I collected all manner of insects, butterflies and moths, caterpillars, snakes and lizards, frogs' spawn, birds' feathers and eggs, plants, rabbit skulls, old birds' nests, anything. My bedroom and our garden shed were both full of 'stuff'. My parents became frustrated with discovering odd live animals and insects crawling amongst our cutlery and linen. So they and my uncle began buying me books on nature to try to dissuade me from bringing wildlife home. I am sure too that those in charge of Ipswich Museum would have raised their eyes in alarm on seeing me approach with a large cardboard box.

My meanderings also took me to the Prettyman Estate at Nacton. I loved it there because there was a decoy pond and before I was 'captured' by the gamekeeper, Mr Baker, I would hide in the vegetation counting the ducks on the pond, or I would note down the different species hanging on his gibbets. It is strange that the only

sparrowhawks that I ever saw then were on Mr Baker's gibbet and nowhere else. None in my back garden. However, nowadays, sparrowhawks are regular visitors to my garden near Christchurch Park. I often see a flash of grey or a pile of feathers so that I know that these birds of prey are doing well. How their fortunes have changed.

In my early days, many neighbours kept chickens too. Our chicken shed or 'coop' was a splendid 'hotel' constructed with old doors, window frames and corrugated iron from our local dump and wire netting kindly 'lent' by the Council. When the hens, particularly bantam hens, went broody it was a signal for the local lads to go out and search for pheasant and partridge eggs which were then placed under those hens. That would mean there would be an alternative for the traditional Sunday roast. It was whilst searching the rough ground to the east of Ipswich, Nacton and Foxhall, in fields which were of poor soil with stones and boulders, that I came across stone curlews. Immediately, I fell in love with this bird. Built like a large plover, alternative name Norfolk Plover or Thicknee, and well-disguised by the colour of these stony fields, they would

run quickly away from their nest which was just a scrape. It was some time before I connected these quiet daytime birds with their very noisy night-time activities. Another wonderful thing about stone curlews was that towards autumn and prior to migration the local pairs and their offspring would come together to form a large sort of crèche in a certain field, a traditional site. There would be a gathering of up to 50 birds all running around on long legs, feeding up before flying off to warmer climes.

"I collected all manner of insects, butterflies and moths, caterpillars, snakes and lizards, frogs' spawn, birds' feathers and eggs, plants, rabbit skulls, old birds' nests, anything."







If you take a walk in the park after it rains it is soon obvious that the lower end of the Park around the cenotaph soon gets very boggy. In addition there is plenty of water with the ponds and of course the spring helping to fill the Wilderness Pond.

Having taken a guided tour of Holywells Park a few years ago I know that some of the Ipswich public water supply had been taken from Holywells and it was also used by the Cobbold brewery, but I didn't know anything about the arrangements in Christchurch Park, apart from a few asides in local history books.

Fortunately a "Google scholar" search pointed me towards an article by David Allen "THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY OF IPSWICH BEFORE THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT OF 1835" written following his work on the Ipswich archives for the 800th anniversary of the Ipswich charter of 1200. The original Holy Trinity Priory, which stood on the site now occupied by the mansion, no doubt took its water from the many natural springs, which fed and still feeds the ponds and grounds.

Early water supplies relied on the gravitational flow from a spring to a conduit head. The conduits were the pipes or channels used to convey and transport the water to a collection point, where the head of water was brought up to the surface and accessed through a conduit head.

There was a conduit head or "water house" behind the mansion until the end of the 19th century providing the water for all the needs of the household, and it may well have been there from the time of the priory. The conduit head was a small room containing a stone sink or tank filled from a spring and it was built against the boundary wall of what is now Bolton Lane near the Woolpack Inn. Water was collected from the conduit head for use in the house. Any water overflowing the tank ran into the stream St Margaret's Wash, which ran down Bolton Lane and then into Upper and Lower Orwell Streets to the river.

The overflow from the ponds in the park took another route, running down what is now the lower end of Fonnereau Road and into Northgate, Upper and Lower Brook Streets, before making it to the river.

The overflow from the ponds created problems for the town and a legal case was taken by the Ipswich Corporation against Edmund Withypoll (then owner of the Christchurch estate) in 1567–68 as he drained his ponds into the town centre. A witness statement reported that the water washed down into Brook Street, Withypoll was accused by the Corporation of draining his ponds and polluting the town, as the water carried with it 'all the filth of his house'. To resolve the problems of the flooding of the town's streets, piping was introduced to channel the water into the drainage pipeline, rather than have the wastewater running down the streets. Having started to manage the drainage, the rise in population in the 16th century led to increased demand for water in towns. During the early 17th century water engineering techniques were advanced enough to permit supplies to be provided from further afield. Ipswich set up a water



supply from Cauldwell Hall springs to the Cornhill, with subscribers able to take water from this pipeline. Once a piped water supply was established to the Cornhill other areas of town set up their own supply with local springs, including those of the Christchurch estate.

Early maps suggest where this conduit head was situated in the park; the 1927 Ordnance Survey map marks a "Waterhead". Based on the maps the site of the conduit head was just north of where the cenotaph now stands, just outside the entrance to the Lower Arboretum and west of the Wilderness Pond. There is now the Horseshoe Pond, which is assumed to be where the conduit head had been. This piecemeal approach to the water supply was not adequate as the town population grew in size, an Act of 1855 allowed a private company to buy the water supply and organise it for the population. We now have water on tap, but should not forget how important the supply of water was for our forebears.

For the full article and maps of the locations mentioned you can check it out at [http://suffolk-institute.org.uk/proceedings-of-the-suffolk-institute-for-archaeology-history-online-vol-XL-part-1-\(2001\)](http://suffolk-institute.org.uk/proceedings-of-the-suffolk-institute-for-archaeology-history-online-vol-XL-part-1-(2001))

## BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS –

owlets, Woodcock, Nightingale and sightings of a Red Kite, Black-crowned Night Heron and Glossy Ibises

Renowned local ornithologist, Philip Murphy, has a unique insight into bird activity in the Park. He has followed what has been going on in the Park for decades and here he covers some of his personal highlights from Spring 2020 and the period from October 2020 to mid January 2021.



### Spring 2020

A positive outcome of lockdown was that more birdwatchers than usual pursued their hobby in Christchurch Park which resulted in a wealth of interesting observations.

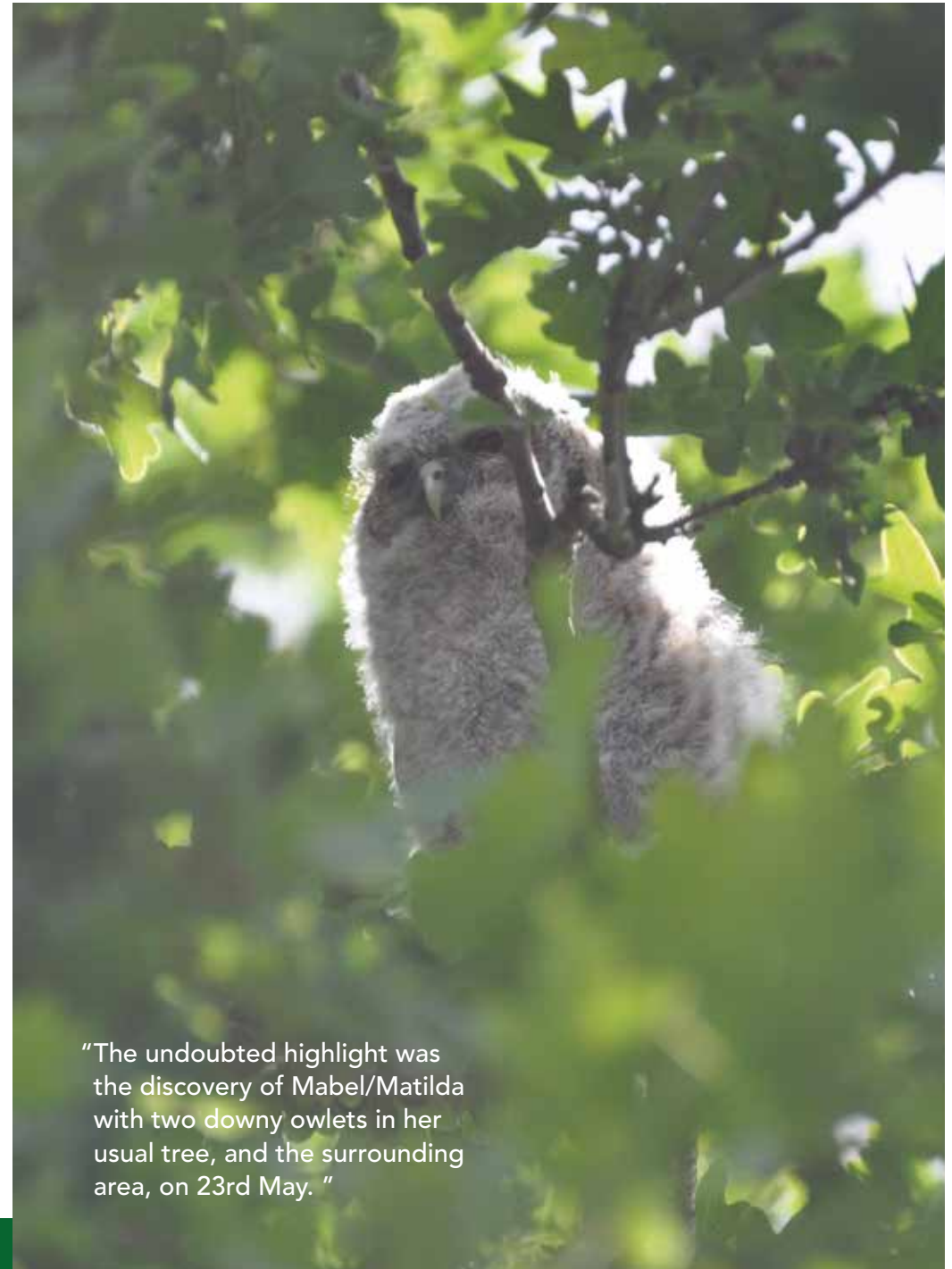
The undoubted highlight was the discovery of Mabel/Matilda with two downy owlets in her usual tree, and the surrounding area, on 23rd May. The birds presented a wonderful opportunity for photographers with some of the resulting photos appearing in the local press.



Perhaps equally impressive was the Park's first successful breeding record of Little Grebes with a pair hatching out four juveniles on Wilderness Pond – as far as we are aware, all four fledged successfully.

A pair of Grey Wagtails bred for the first recorded time either in, or in the immediate vicinity of, the Park. Both adults were seen collecting food at the Round Pond in late April; they used the Pond's raised concrete perimeter as a launch pad from which they would fly out over the water in order to catch flying insects. By mid May they had brought three fledged juveniles to the Round Pond presumably in order to teach them how to catch their own food.

Another 'first' for the Park was the successful breeding on the Mansion roof of a pair of Lesser Black-backed Gulls, which reared at least one juvenile. The parents were typically aggressive and would dive-bomb anybody who got too close to the Mansion and their precious offspring.



"The undoubted highlight was the discovery of Mabel/Matilda with two downy owlets in her usual tree, and the surrounding area, on 23rd May. "





On the debit side, a Coot, presumably one of the successful 2019 pair, arrived on Wilderness Pond on 12th March. This bird obviously expected its former partner to literally drop out of the sky and proceeded to start constructing a typically huge nest. Unfortunately the former partner did not arrive and, after letting out its frustration and aggression on the Pond's Mallards and Moorhens, it was not seen after 1st May.

A Red Kite, seen over the Park on 14th July, is the site's first record of this spectacular raptor, but it was seen by only one fortunate observer. More obliging was another, and long-anticipated, 'first' for the Park in the form of a singing Nightingale in the dense bushes in the vicinity of the steps leading up from the bird reserve to the play area between 19th – 21st April – if only it had stayed longer and attracted a female!

### October to Mid January 2020/2021

The most unexpected sightings were made by Park Team member Brian Macdonald who noted an immature Black-crowned Night Heron flying south over the Upper Arboretum on 12th November and two Glossy Ibises flying east over the Park on 25th November. Also on 25th November, Brian flushed a Woodcock whilst he was working in the Upper Arboretum. (You can read more about Brian on the back cover where he appears in our regular 'Ten Questions' feature.)

On Wilderness Pond, peak totals of Mandarin Ducks were 35 in both November and December. Little Grebes had bred successfully on the Pond in 2020 and one of the adults remained there until 2021. The male Hooded Merganser (a fabulous duck, although this particular individual is an escapee) had last been seen on the Pond on 27th September, but it was back there on 2nd January showing, as usual, a keen interest in the female mallards!

Very surprisingly, a female Mallard accompanied by 15 newly-hatched ducklings, was found on Wilderness Pond on 20th November – five of the ducklings were still present into January 2021. A new brood of three Mallard ducklings on Wilderness Pond on 4th December was seen only on that date.

Up to five Ring-necked Parakeets (now re-named as Rose-ringed Parakeets by ornithology's authorities) were present in the war memorial area of the Park in October and November. Mabel/Matilda the Tawny Owl had not been reported since June 2020 but on 28th October she was back in her usual tree where she attracted many admirers into 2021. Finally, a roost of Magpies in the evergreen trees at the back of the old croquet lawn contained 53 birds on 10th December.

**Many thanks to Tony Powell and Reg Snook who provided much of the information upon which this is based.**

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

### From the Treasurer, Jessica Webster

We are all in a kind of never, never land including members of the Friends of Christchurch Park. Almost from the start of the financial year (1st March 2020) we were in lock down. This meant that we were unable to contribute to the new playground or any other ventures.

At the start of the financial year 28.02.20, we had £3130.72 in the account and I had high hopes of having the 2019 – 2020 accounts audited and put to bed before the AGM in April, but then there was lock down!

As of the 19th January 2021 we have £6,226.56 in the account and I've just seen the auditor to check that we can have both years audited before we finally get a chance to have an AGM.

Thank you to all the members of FoCP for still paying their subs. We now have a substantial balance in the account. The only expenses that we have incurred in the whole year, were for the newsletter. If anyone got ideas for the coming year it would be lovely to have your suggestions.

### Obituaries

We are saddened to learn recently of the deaths of two past Committee Members who played a crucial part in the early days of the Friends:

Michael Parson, original Secretary  
Peter Grimwade, former Deputy Chairman and Treasurer  
Delia Hammerton, Committee Member and Parkmobile driver

### Corporate members

We are grateful for the support of our corporate members:

Christchurch Dental  
Christchurch Solicitors  
W.D Coe Ltd  
Woodcock & Son  
Gilmour Piper & Associates  
The Greyhound  
Hightop  
Kerseys Solicitors  
Ipswich Jaffa  
Ipswich School

Ipswich and Suffolk Club  
Nicholas Jacob Architects  
Scrutton Bland  
The Fitness Unit  
Thornbank  
Orwell Vets  
The Will Shop  
Woodcock & Son  
Woodbridge Antiques



### New lifetime members

Wendy Harvey  
Ken and Christine Lightfoot

### New members

Rt Revd M Seeley  
Wendy Harvey  
Simon Farr & Ann Lee  
Daniel Wilkinson  
Stephen Poole  
David & Judith Saunders  
Steve and Sari Pestell  
David Mears





## Call out for new committee members

There are just a handful of us in the Friends' Committee and we could really do with some more help.

We have spaces for new committee members including a Secretary. The committee meets about four or five times a year at the Reg Driver Centre at 5pm.

We try to keep meetings to an hour and would greatly welcome new members. Nominations can be sent to Jessica Webster, 33, Constable Road IP4 2UW or emailed to her at [jessica.webster1@btinternet.com](mailto:jessica.webster1@btinternet.com) Tel 01473 218809

### Nomination Form

Nominee (who has agreed) \_\_\_\_\_

First proposer \_\_\_\_\_

Second proposer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Membership Form

Membership costs £10 per household per year, or £100 for lifetime membership. Subscriptions by cheque, cash or Standing Order are due each year on 1st March.

- If you already pay by continuous Standing Order, no further action is required.
- If you would like to pay by Standing Order, please send the completed Standing Order Authority (below) to Robert Fairchild. For questions about Standing Orders please call Robert on 01473 254255, or email [robert.fairchild@ntlworld.com](mailto:robert.fairchild@ntlworld.com)
- We also accept payment by cash or cheque. In this case, please send the completed form and payment to **Robert Fairchild, 17 Henley Avenue, Ipswich IP1 6RN**
- We now also have the option of Lifetime Membership for a one off payment of £100.

### How to Pay

Please tick method of payment and complete the details below:

☐ Standing Order    ☐ Cheque    ☐ Cash    ☐ Direct Bank Transfer  
(please use your name as the reference)

### Personal Details

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

### Standing Order Mandate

Account to be credited: Friends of Christchurch Park    Amount: £10.00

Bank: Lloyds Bank, Cornhill, Ipswich    Account No: 02952840    Sort Code: 30-94-55

Account name to be debited \_\_\_\_\_

Bank and Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Account number \_\_\_\_\_ Sort code \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay Friends of Christchurch Park immediately and then on 1st March each year.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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@ChristchurchParkIpswich



@ChristchurchPk



# Ten Questions for Brian Macdonald, technician, from the Park Team

## 1. What is your favourite part of the park?

The Arboretum – a peaceful haven in a mad world.

## 2. What is the best part of your job?

Being able to work in such a fantastic environment.

## 3. What is the most difficult part of your job?

Weather in many respects: too dry, too wet, too windy, too snowy!

## 4. Has the park changed during lockdown?

The park hasn't changed, but there are a lot of new users who don't always appreciate the work we do to keep it looking nice.

## 5. How can users of the park make your life a bit easier?

By keeping to the paths and avoiding trampling down plants and shrubs.

## 6. How do you relax?

Bird watching – I have been to many places but the Suffolk coast is special.



## 7. If you could meet anyone in the world – dead or alive – who would it be?

Henry VIII – there are a few questions I would like to ask him ...

## 8. What is your favourite film?

Blade Runner – the original classic movie but Green Mile and The Shawshank Remdemption aren't far behind.

## 9. If you could change one thing in the park what would it be?

Putting back the gates on the Arboretum as a reminder what an important part of the park it is.

## 10. What three words best describe you?

Hardworking – reliable – old-fashioned.



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