NEWSLETTER

No. 11

Friends of Meadow Park

AUTUMN

2006

FUN THINGS TO DO ON A SATURDAY MORNING

Activity Days are usually well supported by a faithful dozen or so, but it would be so much better if more 'Friends' would turn up. What about it?

In September, you could have smashed stone, Dartmoor fashion, barrowed it to where the paths were most in need of repair, tamped it and rolled it level, and earned the gratitude of the park's winter walkers, who will now have a much more comfortable time. Or you could have weeded the shrub border.

A Rabble of Barrows—
photo by Clive Billson

Homeward bound, job done
photo by Clive Billson

In October you could have used a good deal less energy and still planted 600 daffodil and narcissus bulbs among the semi-mature trees in Bateman Field, where they should naturalise to give a cheerful show each Spring. You could have planted a few more donated plants and some tulips and anemones in the shrub border, which you could also have weeded, after you had collected a couple of bags of rubbish. Alternatively, you could have spent an hour with our chairman dragging straggly vegetation and assorted debris from the Sheepwash Brook.

Daffodils in Bateman Field, to be joined by 600 more next Spring!

Come November, you could have hacked and tugged at the American dogwood which is taking over a corner of Hall's Field. It is fiendishly tough stuff, and the sooner the Borough Council set about the job the better. You would not have enjoyed **this** morning……..! Of course, you could have weeded the shrub border.

Dogwood dell
photo by Debbie Slade

In 2007, we shall pollard a willow, erect three notice boards, repair a path, clear the stream, weed the shrub border…. DO JOIN US!

ACTIVITY DAYS start again soon. Please make a note of them.

Saturday 10 February	Saturday 12 May
Saturday 10 March	Saturday 9 June
Saturday 14 April	Saturday 14 July

We meet at 10am near the Manor Farm Meadow entrance

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 30 NOVEMBER, 2006

CHAIRMANS REPORT

Another year under our belt, and in my opinion one of our most successful.

Working days have been organised most months, and we now have a small but very dedicated band of 'Friends' who turn out on a regular basis to undertake the varied but, in the main, very necessary tasks that have been undertaken.

One of our major successes has been the transformation of an overgrown area at the Manor Farm Meadow entrance into what I am sure will develop as an attractive landscaped area. Thanks to all the volunteers who have worked hard over the summer to keep on top of the weeds, and to everyone who donated plants.

Other projects have included clearing the brook, pollarding trees, new planting of trees, wild flowers and over 600 bulbs, clearance of some of the American dogwood, and of course, the laying of over 300 yards of new stone on the top pathway. Rushcliffe Borough Council provided the stone and have paid for the roller, but many man hours over a full week-end went into barrowing the stone from the tipping point to the required site. We helped keep up our spirits by trying to come up with a suitable collective noun to describe a multitude of wheelbarrows (a "rabble", perhaps?).

RBC appear to have got the mowing regime right this year, but they remain reluctant to do the other things that we have requested, primarily making the park more secure from the ever present threat of travellers' taking up residence. They recently set up a Members' panel to look at all the open spaces owned by the Borough Council; in their report they describe Meadow Park as "fit for purpose" and the mowing contract as "excellent value for money". At £2,000 p.a. it sure is, compared with the over £200,000 spent at Rushcliffe Country Park!

My biggest disappointment has been that we have been unable to get the information panels completed and installed, but we are now very close, and we should be able to get the artwork to the manufacturer early in the New Year.

Finally I must give a big thank you to all the members of the Management Committee—the meetings are nearly always very interesting, because, believe it or not, we do not always see eye to eye on every topic! However, so far we have always managed to reach a consensus and parted as friends (as well as 'Friends')

Particular thanks must go to our wonderful Secretary, Debs, who gives service above and beyond the call of duty, to Conrad who keeps a tight grip on the finances, and to Mollie for producing the superb newsletter that I always look forward to receiving.

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen

Kevin Shaw

From the Secretary's report:

Through the year, the full committee met six times, with a very good attendance as a rule, and sub-groups have met as required. In May, Peter Bloxham showed more than a passing interest in the work of the committee, so he was formally invited to join as a co-opted member, and is now involved in the planning stages of the creation of an arboretum.

Unfortunately, some members did not renew last January, but we gained a couple of new members during the year and the total now stands at 85. PLEASE ask your friends, especially those who are frequent park users, to consider joining us. Hopefully they might be interested and, even better, be able to attend an activity morning.

When you renew your membership in January 2007, would you please try to give e-mail details, as it makes the message delivery system much easier, and is kinder to my dog's paws!

On behalf of the committee, I should like to thank Kevin for another year at the helm. The committee is a mixture of personalities and interests, and he manages to steer us all in roughly the same direction!

ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD 01/11/05 TO 31/10/06

Previous		2006		
	Receipts			
£291.00	Member donations	£346.00		
279.40	Other donations	5.00		
155.63	Grants	50.00		Note 1
50.00	Sale of notelets/photos	77.00		
0.22	Bank interest	0.28		
111.50	Fund raising	164.90		Note 2
£887.75			£643.18	
	Payments			
25.00	Subscription BTCV	35.00		
155.63	Insurance	155.63		Note 3
21.00	Cost of sale materials	13.50		
0.00	Publicity/Education	10.00		
424.87	Projects	170.50		Note 4
£626.50			£384.63	
£261.25	**Excess of receipts over payments**		£258.55	
	Bank reconciliation			
62.17	Opening balances	323.42		
887.75	Add total receipts	643.18		
949.92		966.60		
626.50	Less total payments	384.63		
323.42	Balance carried forward	581.97		

Notes
1. Action Earth grant towards stone for paths
2. Profit from stall
3. Grant request to cover this cost has been submitted
4. Resurfacing of paths

On a lovely morning in September, the diverted footpath, which now provides continuous access from the east of the village through Meadow Park and under the railway bridge to Fox Hill and West Leake, was declared officially open by County Cllr Lynn Sykes, supported by Deputy Mayor of Rushcliffe Cllr Christine Jeffreys, Cllr Brian Dale, chairman of East Leake Parish Council Amenities Committee, and Mr Richard Tilden-Smith of Great Central Railway (Nottingham), owners of the railway line.

Members of the Kirk family were present to see the naming in honour of their father Frank who gave the land to the village. A number of 'Friends' attended, including Dennis Fox, parish footpaths warden, who along with Jane Baines, Notts CC Rights of Way Officer, had done a great deal of the work to bring about the new route.

PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE

NOTICE BOARDS

We have been rattling on about a notice/ orientation board for ages, and thought we were going to get one designed at Harry Carlton School, which seemed a good way of spreading "ownership" of the park as well as having some bright young design ideas put into it. That arrangement broke down, unfortunately, so we settled for an in-house job.

We are most grateful to Sue Lewis, who undertook the task, building an illustrative display round an impressionistic map drawn by Max Watson. We are delighted with the result. Below is a sneak preview of a draft version, which is substantially the same as the finished artwork. This has now gone to the manufacturer, and the job should be completed by the Spring.

The long delay had one advantage in that we were able to gather sufficient funds to install three boards, at the Manor Farm Meadow, Nixon Walk and Bateman Road entrances to the park.

ARBORETUM

The idea of planting a representative British tree collection has been at the back of our minds since the early days, but has proved rather a controversial issue.

The problem has been which species to select, and there are several schools of thought about this. Native British? - in which case is that strictly pre-Roman, or does it include long-naturalised incomers? Native Nottinghamshire? - that might exclude some species that have become characteristic of our landscape. A small group comprising Neil Hunter, John Adcock and Peter Bloxham have produced a working scheme, which the committee have knocked about a bit, and we think we know what we're at now!

The starting point will be the clumps of trees planted in 2002 along the southern edge of Bateman Field. This will be extended as far as the Bateman Road entrance, to provide future generations with a living reference library. More details when we have them.