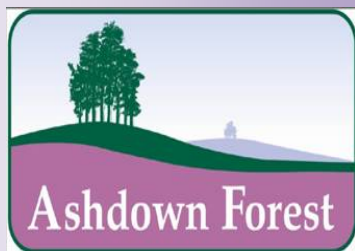


The Volunteer



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Volunteer BBQ...
- Date for the diary...
- Recipe of the Season...
- Bird Report...
- Blast from the past...
- From the Director's Chair...
- Clerk's News...
- Upcoming exhibitions...
- Conservation and Management news...
- Finally...

The Newsletter for all Ashdown Forest Volunteers

Volunteers BBQ -

The weather was amazingly kind to us for the Volunteers BBQ. The sausages and burgers were cooked to perfection as usual (with a little extra help from Anne Smith) and once again thanks go to Janet Wirdnam for her sterling work in the kitchen – chopping onions and various other vegetables! Below is a selection of photos and a thank you note from Ros.



Dear Pat, Staff, Volunteers and Conservators

Thank you so much for the beautiful tugs, flowers and the compost bins. I absolutely love the tugs and you will see that I have already used the largest one, at least, I hope you received the photos of the full tug and the flowers arranged in a vase sent from my phone! The site of my compost bin is currently over-run with pumpkins so I will have to wait for the autumn clean up before I can assemble them, but I will send a picture when they are in situ. They really are just what I wanted as my old compost bins consisted of pallets held together with bailer twine - a good all rounder "make do" but they rotted away and now is the time to swatten up! You will be pleased to know that I have decided to use the smallest tug as my key container - one I have cleared the half window sill of all the paper!!!

It was a lovely send off and great that I could say "goodbye" to so many people at once.

Thank you all again, love Ros

DATE FOR THE DIARY!!

Volunteers Coffee Morning
Thursday 15th October
11.00am

Forest Centre update

Upcoming Research Group exhibition

Remembrance Sunday

Training needs

Apple and blackberry shortcake...

Serves 6-8

1. Peel the apples, remove the cores and cut each apple into about 16 slices. Put the apples, lemon zest, sugar and 2 tablespoons of water in a medium saucepan. Cover and stew over a low heat for about 10 minutes, until the apples are soft but not mushy. Allow them to cool.
2. Cream the butter and caster sugar together in a mixing bowl until fluffy and smooth. Add the egg and mix well. Sift the flour and baking powder into the mixture and stir until combined. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and divide the dough into two equal portions. Wrap in cling film and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C fan/Gas 4. Roll each piece of cake dough into a round approximately 22cm across. Press one round into a 24cm nonstick spring form cake tin. Spread the apples over the dough, leaving a small border around the edge, and then put the blackberries on top. Place the other round of dough on top and press the edges together. Brush with water and sprinkle with sugar. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes.
4. Remove the tart from the oven and allow to cool in the tin for 10 minutes before removing and serving.



Ingredients

For the fruit

- 2 large cooking apples
- 4 eating apples
- 1 lemon, finely grated zest only
- 2 tbsp caster sugar
- 150 g fresh or frozen blackberries

For the shortcake

- 185 g unsalted butter
- 185 g caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
- 1 egg, plus 1 egg yolk
- 275 g plain flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder

Taken from www.goodfood.uktv.co.uk

Information Barn Volunteers.....

Just a couple of things:

- In the hope of having a spell of good weather and to take advantage of the half term the Information Barn will continue to open during the week in October. Please add your name to the rota if available.
- At the weekends please feel free to park in the yard. It's only during the week when the yard is busy that we ask that if you can use the Forest Centre car park instead.
- For security reasons please don't provide members of the public with details relating to the volunteer rota.

BIRD REPORT

Nightjar Bird Walk.....

The evening Nightjar walk on Saturday 27 June went well. Two separate Nightjars were spotted flying low over the heath close enough to get good views, and later one or two Nightjars entertained the group with their churring song right up to the end of the walk, even close to the car park.

Nightjar walk attendees



SUMMER 2015

New members of staff – In July we welcome Kirsty and Louise to the team. The Conservators made a change to the role of Clerk, splitting the post into two separate functions; Clerk and Finance Officer.

- ❖ As Clerk, Kirsty is responsible for the Board and Committee governance processes, Licenses and Bye-law infringements and handles planning applications affecting Ashdown Forest. She also supervises office administration and personnel matters.
- ❖ As the Finance Officer, Louise is responsible for the day-to-day financial management at Ashdown Forest and provides financial support and guidance to the Board of Conservators.



Pop-up Café – A huge *'thank you'* to all the Volunteers who helped run the Pop Up Café during the weekends throughout August. With numerous cups of tea, coffee and slices of cake sold it was a great success. We hope to run it again near Christmas to coincide with the sale of Christmas trees but will confirm closer to the date.

Education Programme – Over the summer the Education Team ran a 3 day holiday play scheme, parent and toddler sessions in the villages in and around the Forest, plus 2 at the Centre and (a rather wet!) archaeology walk for families as part of the national Festival of Archaeology. They also attended the Elderflower Fields Festival and Into the Trees event to promote the work of the Ashdpwn Forest Conservators.

From the Director's Chair...

The last couple of issues have been full of 'goodbyes' and 'welcomes' and we have yet more! It was lovely to see so many of you at the summer BBQ where we were not only able to say a big 'thank you' for all the support and help you give us in so many ways on a daily basis but also to say 'thank you' and 'farewell' to Ros – I know it meant a lot to her to be surrounded by many old and new friends on her last day.

As Ros said on the evening it's not just a new start for her as she looks forward to her retirement, but also for all of us here at the Forest Centre. We have now split the role, and are pleased to welcome Kirsty Dirs as Clerk and Louise Meehan as Finance Officer – it will take us all a bit of time to get used to the new ways of working but look forward to having Kirsty and Louise as part of the team.

I'm pleased to tell you that our second planning application for updating the tractor shed and workshops has now been accepted – so all we need to do now is raise the funds to continue all the planned upgrading work! I will keep you posted as to progress.

The BBQ, Christmas meal and Coffee Mornings are great ways to get everyone together socially, to inform and communicate with each other and on occasions to have some training – they are also a good way for you volunteers to get to know one another and hear about the hugely different activities and interest groups, so if you find yourself sitting next to someone you don't know, introduce yourself and tell them what you do! Just as a reminder this is our current list: Information Barn and Visitor Centre; Pop Up Café; Conservation; Volunteer Rangers; Specialist Walk Leaders; Health Walks; Stock Lookers; Poetry Walks and Workshops; Ashdown Forest Bird Group; History and Research Group; Mounted Rangers, Specialist Advisors and Office Support.

A particular 'thank you' to those of you who have helped us out over the last year when we have been between staff or needed cover in the office at holiday times – we have enjoyed working with you!

Pat

Blast from the past....

In the course of an office sort out we came across a number of photos of the Forest and of the staff from years gone by which we thought would be fun to share!



A Forest resident who visited the Centre suggested that this may be a photo of Len Arnold, a Forest Ranger for many years. Do let us know if you have any more information.



The pretty sparse former Rangers Depot.



The original Ashdown Forest Information Centre.

The WagLog #23 – “The eyes have it!”

Hi again. I'm writing this on the eve of my holiday near Wareham in Dorset. I'm very excited as I've got an itinerary of walking, swimming, beaches, heathland, a castle, pubs, fish & chips and even a steam train. I'm also planning a stop at one of my favourite old haunts, The New Forest, on the way. I'm slightly concerned that he wants me to take him to Studland Beach (which I believe is a nudist beach). It doesn't worry me (if you've got it, flaunt it), but it's not likely to be very warm in September and he's no spring chicken anymore! I'll let you know all about it in my next report...

I had a fab time at the summer barbecue; it was lovely to see you all. Thanks for all my tit-bits especially the sausages (I have to congratulate Sammy & Michael, they were cooked to perfection!). I think I managed to keep most of them a secret because I still got my dinner as well – happy days.

I miss Ros, she always said that I was her favourite, although I wonder if she said that to all the boys? I have managed to make a new friend in Kirsty though. Kirsty sits in Ros's old seat and keeps my treats in the same drawer! I make life easy for Kirsty – I waltz into the office and open the drawer for her with my nose (which she loves). Then I sit perfectly and patiently, tilting my head slightly, quizzically to one side giving her “the eyes”. I even point when I'm asked. It works every time; I seem to have this effect on the ladies (ha! – and they say humans are like their owners!).

I'm afraid to have to report some bad news too... More dogs attacking and killing sheep on my Chase. One of two Labradors had to be shot earlier this year after they killed three sheep. It's not the dogs' fault; it's the humans who are responsible for their behaviour. If only their humans could either train them properly, or failing that keep them on a lead, it wouldn't happen. There's no excuse and it gives us dogs a bad name. In August four sheep were killed in as many days; at least one, and probably three, by a Boxer who was allowed to run loose in the grazing area. The Boxer and his human are still “at large”. The Forest Centre runs “sheep-proof your dog” courses to help with training.

I'll see you when I get back from my holiday. Love & kisses, Scallywag X



Clerk's News...

For those of you I haven't yet met, I am Kirsty and I am the Clerk half of Ros' previous role. As Clerk I am responsible for (amongst other things) the Board and Committee governance processes, Licences and Bye-law infringements and I also handle planning applications affecting Ashdown Forest.

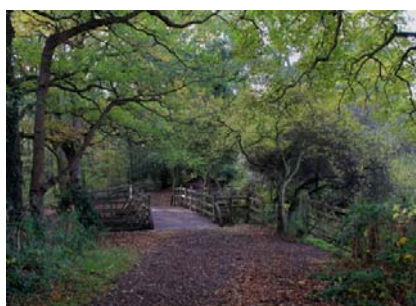
Louise Meehan has assumed the new standalone role of Finance Officer, managing the day to day financial elements and providing support and guidance to the Conservators. You are likely to find me poring over papers on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and you will find Louise buried in spreadsheets on a Monday, Thursday and Friday.

Clearly apparent from day one (and prior to the removal of my coat); ensure my middle drawer is fully stocked with an assortment of meaty treats. For the dogs I should add. This evidently precedes the Memorandum of Understanding which I am pleased to report has been finalised and signed by ESCC.

More news to follow next quarter but in the meantime, for those of you whose acquaintance I have yet to make, I do hope to see you at the Coffee Morning on October 15th.

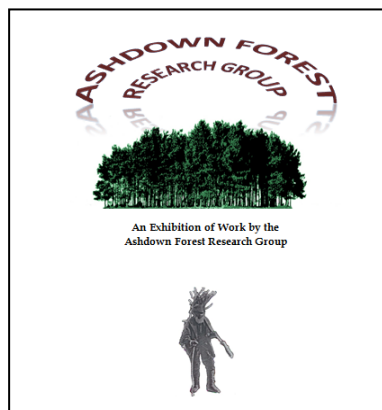
Kirsty

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions.....



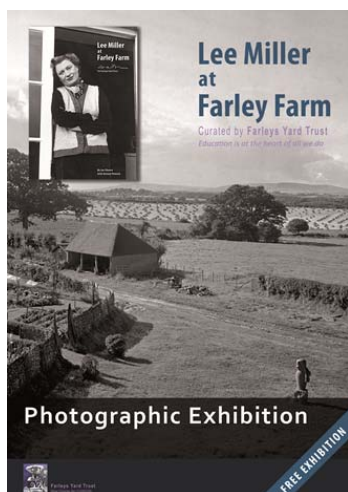
Craig Williams "Glimpses of the Forest"

A photographer living on Ashdown Forest, Craig's landscapes capture the light and shade of the natural world, including the wildlife and macro images of the flora and places in view. For a glimpse of Craig's work visit his website www.craigwilliamsgallery.com. The exhibition will run from 22nd June to 31st October 2015.



Exhibition by the Ashdown Forest Research Group.....

The group explores many historical aspects of Ashdown Forest, its effects on the people who lived or worked on the Forest and its fringes, and the impact that the lives and occupations of this scattered community have had on the Forest's landscape.



Lee Miller at Farley Farm.....

A rare opportunity to see unique photographs illustrating the life of the internationally famous model, photographer and war correspondent, Lee Miller, at Farley Farm House in Chiddingly, between Eastbourne and Lewes. This was her home from 1949 after her marriage to British surrealist artist Sir Roland Penrose and is known as the 'home of the surrealists'. It was visited by Max Ernst, Paul Eluard, Man Ray, Picasso and many other artists central to the development of surrealism in Europe and Britain from the 1930s onwards. The exhibition will run from 4th November to 5th January 2016.

On 14th and 21st November from 2.30-4.00pm there will be an illustrated presentation by Rosemary Colebourn, Education Advisor of the Farley Arts Trust, providing an introduction to surrealism, the remarkable heritage associated with Farley Farm House and the role of the Farley Arts Trust. This will be followed by a guided tour of the photographs. Maximum of 15 people. £5.00 charge. More details on how to book to follow.

© Lee Miller Archives, England 2009. All Rights Reserved. www.leemiller.co.uk. This image for use only in connection with the publicity for the exhibition titled: 'Lee Miller at Farley Farm'



Farley Arts Trust
with education at our core

Conservation and Management News.....

Steve Alton, Conservation Officer - Higher Level Stewardship, the agri-environment scheme that has funded our conservation work for the last 10 years, is coming to an end and will be replaced by Countryside Stewardship from January 2016. We continue to work closely with Natural England, the government's conservation advisors, on a bid for this new tranche of funding, which will now be extended to include woodland management work. If successful – and we are optimistic – this money will pay for another five years of conservation work on the Forest.

One of the innovations that the funding will pay for is so-called 'invisible' fencing, using a buried loop of wire which sends a signal to collars worn by our cattle. Installation of two trial areas was carried out in spring 2015, and after some initial teething problems the system seems to be working well. This will allow us to extend grazing to more areas of the Forest in the future without obstructing the free movement of the public or visibly intruding on the landscape of the Forest.

Mike Payne, West Chase – This summer has been a very busy one involving a lot of tasks, like Forest Centre maintenance, machinery research, replacement and repairs, and a few more exciting jobs like the replacement of a submerged pumping house in the Vachery and dangerous roadside tree works.

There has been a lot of grazing on the West Chase this year. We have had ponies, sheep and cattle. We tried out the new invisible fencing but have unfortunately suffered a few problems which Caroline is in the process of trying to remedy. We are looking forward, hopefully, to continue the trial next year

The submerged pumping house roof was unfortunately damaged last winter. In the efforts to remove the roof and check the structure beneath I found all the walls integrity to be compromised. All of the walls were starting to crumble and it was only a matter of time before the whole lot caved in catastrophically. In this sense it was a blessing in disguise that the roof got damaged. The operation to replace the pumping house turned out to be a mammoth task involving the draining of two ponds just so we could pump all the water out of the pump house. Then precise measurements of the chamber were taken, old walls removed, shuttering made to measure and fitted, reinforcing mesh positioned and lastly concrete mixed and filled to create the new wall. The pumping house is now fixed and hopefully secure for a few more decades.

I continue to deal with extensive invasive weed spraying. This mostly involves spraying Japanese knotweed, rhododendron, gaultheria and black cherry.

The Conservation Volunteers are starting up towards the end of September and have 8 work parties organised up until December. They will be continuing their valiant efforts along the Vachery Gorge. Thinning the scrub woodland either side to let light in and encourage hardwoods to grow healthy. Clearing vegetation in and around the ponds and rocks to keep it open and enjoyable for all. If you are interested in joining any of these work groups please contact Charlie in the office. I look forward to the challenges on the Forest in the years ahead.

Mike Yates, North Chase – The two welsh ponies that have spent the summer on the golf course grazing area have been moved to an experimental grazing area next to the Millennium Clump. A digital solar powered traffic counter has appeared on a heathland site near Lintons Car Park. Known as ATCs they are an invasive species of a digital kind and seem to be spreading rapidly all over the Forest. Despite our best attempts to rid the Forest of alien species these ones are here to stay for 4 years it is rumored! Remembrance Sunday 8th November - marshals are needed to man the carparks. There is a list in the radio room - if you can help it is always appreciated.

Rich Allum, South Chase – Another busy summer on the South Chase... Hebridean sheep were introduced to a small enclosure called "Primrose Patch", Fairwarp as well as "Ardens", Nutley. The annual bracken-mowing programme has continued apace and is now more-or-less complete. We've also undertaken the usual reactive fencing and gate repairs to keep the Commoners' livestock on the Forest. Unfortunately I have been kept busy with many incidents of sheep worrying by dogs again this summer, including 4 fatal attacks in as many days. Recently we have cut and treated American Black Cherry (a highly invasive alien species) at Paynes Hill, Fairwarp and sprayed Rhododendron ponticum regrowth near Duddleswell.

Upcoming work will include removing another invasive alien plant species, Parrot's Feather, from Ellisons Ponds and the annual tree survey of all the roads and Rights of Way on the South Chase. Following that I hope we'll get time to undertake repairs to our wooden structures - barriers and "dragon's teeth" and replace mounting blocks beside all the gates.



The Conservators of Ashdown Forest

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(103,708 hits May-Aug)

Ashdown Forest Blog

www.blog.ashdownforest.org

(9,985 hits May-Aug)



(2,918 followers)



(1,495 likes)



E-news (1,060 subscribers)



Events on the Forest.....

Throughout the year there are number of events on the Forest that are not organised by the office. Here is a list of what is currently in the diary. Information is sent out via our E-News service on a Friday of upcoming events that weekend. If you haven't already done so do sign up to receive these alerts on our website – www.ashdownforest.org.

- 11 September - ALSAR search dog training – Box or Twyford
- 13 September – Kit Wilson Trust sponsored dog walk – Pylons
- 13 September – Evans cycle event
- 20 September – AFRA Pleasure Ride – Blackhill
- 27 September – Weald Challenge running event
- 27 September – Hever Castle triathlon, bike event
- 2 October – Evans cycle event
- 4 October - ALSAR search dog training – Box or Twyford
- 4 October – Ashdown Forest Frenzy Sportive cycle event
- 1 November - ALSAR search dog training – Box or Twyford
- 15 November – Orienteering event – Hindleap
- 15 November - ALSAR search dog training – Box or Twyford
- 6 December - ALSAR search dog training – Box or Twyford

And finally.....

Here is a selection of some the most recent reviews of Ashdown Forest from www.tripadvisor.co.uk

"Relax and breathe the air"
Reviewed 1 September 2015

My girlfriend and I often go to the "forest" for long and short walks. It is a brilliant place in any season. It is more heather and gorse than forest. Plenty of car parking and many varied walks. No commercialization except for the ice cream van at King's Standing. For Winnie the Pooh fans there is the Pooh walks.

"Stunning walks"
Reviewed 25 August 2015

It is so nice to be able to walk on the forest, and if you go early in the morning you will be very unlucky if you don't see the Deer. It never appears to be crowded as with so much space it feels like you are the only ones there. A heaven for dog walkers and horse riders... It is mainly heathland which affords amazing views. Bring a picnic and spend the day, you won't regret it.

"Lovely views - GREAT picnic area"
Reviewed 24 July 2015

Beautiful views, clear paths to walk along, lots of parking areas and great for a picnic. Enjoy as a whole family, along with your dogs and it is such a great free day out.

"Visitor Centre is fabby"
Reviewed 25 June 2015

What a peaceful and relaxing place. Pretty barn buildings are cool. I liked looking at the trees and grass's as well.