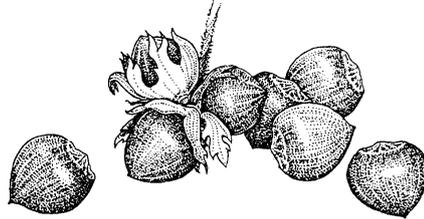


In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 37 March 2017

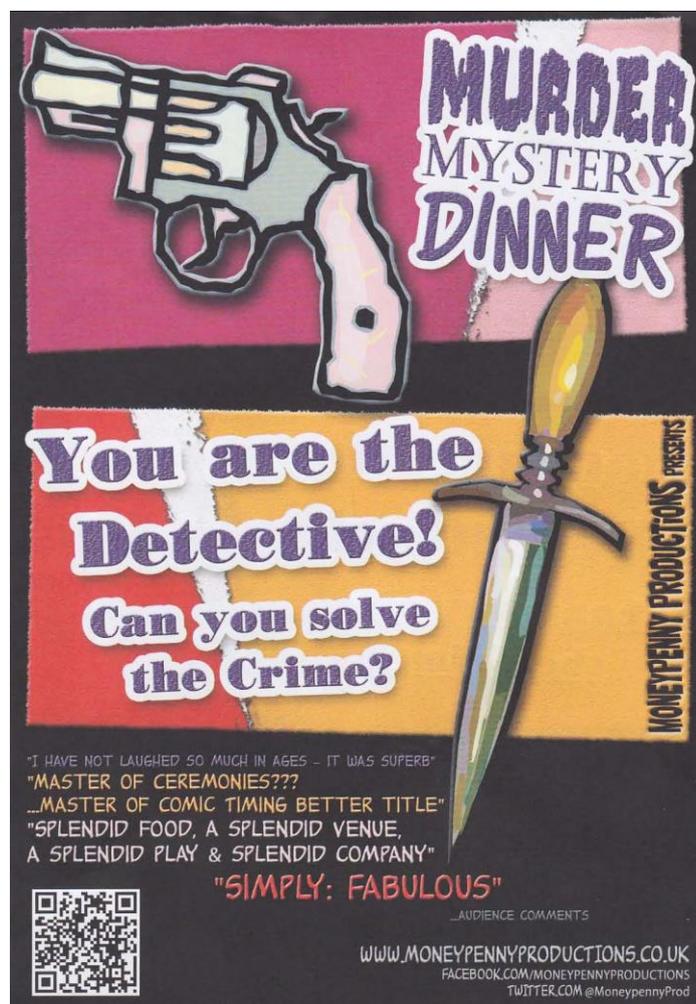
In this edition of In a Nutshell:
MURDER MYSTERY EVENT
SUBS DUE THIS MONTH
A VOLUNTEER'S MEMORIES
END OF RESTORATION
IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE QUARRY GARDEN TODAY...
DATE FOR YOUR DIARY
BEE UPDATE
WOODSTORE WORK
ROSEY CENTREPIECE
AND FINALLY...

Dead over Dinner



Following a successful meeting recently with Lawrence Brown of *Money Penny Murder Mysteries*, I am pleased to confirm that this very special FoSE event will take place in the **Barn Café** on **29th July** this year at **7 o'clock** for a **7.30 start**. The company of four performers is proposing *Dead over Dinner*, which, with its Cluedoesque country house and 1920s setting, will fit Standen's ambience perfectly.

For those of you unfamiliar with the format, the performance takes place in the round, with a scene acted out between each course. At the end of the meal, each table tries to work out who the murderer is. Lawrence told us he likes a degree of interactivity, so feel free to participate in any way, or to just quietly observe. You are also encouraged to dress up as your favourite detective, but this is not obligatory.



Tickets for this event will be available from 1st April but you can reserve places now by emailing newsletter@fose.org.uk. Your requests will be held until 14th April but if you have not paid and collected your ticket by then you will lose the reservation. **Until the end of June, tickets will be on sale at £25 each; this will include the murder mystery performance and a three course summertime meal, tea, coffee and mints.** After 30th June, the tickets will be sold at £26, so do book early. Tickets can be collected and payment made - once the booking has been confirmed - from any member of the FoSE committee. Should you be unable to do this in person, please email newsletter@fose.org.uk for my address and then send payment

with a stamped addressed envelope so that I can post your tickets.

You are requested to bring your own drinks and glasses to the event, although jugs of water will be available. When you book, please let us know if you wish to opt for the vegetarian menu or have any food allergies. The anticipated menu, which is currently being finalised, will soon appear on the FoSE website.

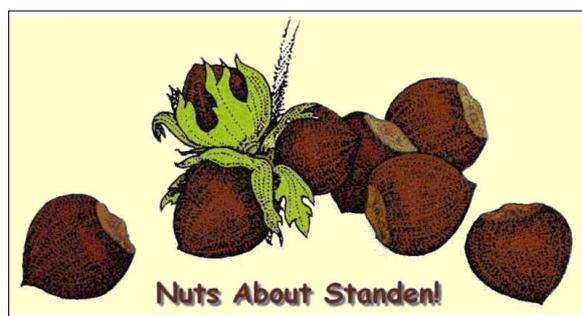
Tables will be set out in 10s. **Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.** You don't need to book a whole table as we will combine smaller groups to fill the tables. However, we urge you to book early if you wish to ensure that a sizeable group is seated together. If you book as an individual, we will do our best to seat you congenially. The tables and tickets will be colour-coded so that you know where you are seated.

This promises to be an excellent evening; the company comes with personal recommendation from a FoSE member who has seen it in action, and I anticipate a rapid take up of the **80 places available**, so do book early for yourself and your family and friends. Publicity posters will be on show soon, so look out for them.

Membership Renewal Month

FoSE membership is due from 1st March. **A renewal form should come to you along with this newsletter.** I know it is a chore, but please do fill the form out and return it to Roy even if your details haven't changed, as it makes it much easier for him to keep track. Renewals should be received by the end of the month at the latest, but I know some of us aren't very good at getting them in promptly. Please, please try to get them in before April. The job of membership secretary is not easy and is made harder if forms come in in dribs and drabs over a long period.

It's only £2 to join FoSE, although many members choose to give more. The money raised, along with what comes in from fund-raising and grants, is made to go a long way. 2016 saw £500 spent on new tools, without which we would be hard-pressed to keep the garden looking as good as it does. Water bowsers were



purchased, so we don't have to walk so far to fill the watering cans; and an electric soil sieve to take the back-break out of producing fine compost; FosE also funded the materials to enclose the stable-yard kitchen area and keep us all snug in the winter. We have also purchased wheelbarrows, mole traps, tub trugs, lawn edgers and water tanks. Trudie has received money for new benches, bird boxes and wood to make dormouse boxes. Rhododendrons and azaleas were purchased for the stable yard bank out of cake money and snowdrops for Rock-top Walk and the Drive. A number of other purchases have also been made which benefit equally garden, gardeners and volunteers. What remained in the greenhouse fund was spent to complete its kitting out, including three heaters and bubblewrap for insulation.

Roy's first day

The stormy weather on what should have been the last day for the Restoration Garden Group was too extreme for Standen to risk damage to its volunteers, but reminded me that usually the weather is no impediment. Here Roy Page recalls his first day volunteering on a very wet day.

I can still remember my first day volunteering at Standen. When I woke up it was pouring with rain and I did not know whether to drive the fifteen miles as I was not sure whether I would be the only volunteer to venture out on a wet and windy January day. Had I known what I know now I would have realised that the volunteers work through all weathers. When I arrived at Standen I found the head gardener, James, who was waiting for me. He directed me to the stable yard where I was introduced to the rest of the volunteers and was made to feel very welcome with tea and cakes on offer. As it was still raining very hard James found us a job that was out of the rain, much to my relief!

I have had a very enjoyable few years working with a great bunch of gardening volunteers through all weathers from snow on the ground to soaring temperatures in the summer. I can honestly say that I have enjoyed every minute of it. Often the visitors commend the work that is being done in the gardens and comment on what a pleasure it is to wander around. I still look forward to Thursdays; it is so varied from planting or landscaping to felling trees, etc. Had it not been for James' dedication, enthusiasm and vision of how he sees the gardens, as well as his constant encouragement, we would not have achieved so much.

I can thoroughly recommend volunteering if you like the outdoors, having fun and interacting with people

This account also appears on the FoSE website.

The end of an era

And so, finally, the great Standen Restoration Project has drawn to a close. Now, supposedly, it's back to business as usual. From now on, every Thursday will be a 'Garden Group' day. I don't suppose anyone has counted up, or costed out, all the hundreds of man hours put in by garden staff and volunteers alike. To commemorate all the effort put in, Anne Scutt is organising a collection to buy either a tree or a statue to be accompanied by a plaque which will acknowledge everyone's hard work and commitment. If you would like to contribute, either put your money in the box in the stable tea-room or give it to a member of the committee to do so on your behalf.

There will be a major celebration for all the volunteers involved in the restoration, in the form of a BBQ, on 1st July this year. Our usual Bluebell/St George's Day event has gone on hold as, with Easter so late, and followed hot on its heels by two bank holidays - always busy visitor times - it was not possible to find a date where we wouldn't overcrowd the car park. Next year, with the new parking spaces up and running, it should be business as usual.

...you're sure of a big surprise...



You may have noticed that Nick and Elaine have been missing a lot from Standen recently. They've become modern-day plant-hunters. First they headed for the Ashwood Nurseries in Kingswinford in the West Midlands. Here they picked up some beautiful Helleborus x hybrids, some Cyclamen coum and a number of ferns, all

of which are now gracing the Quarry Garden. They then visited Crûg Farm Plants in Caernafon in North Wales, where they were able to source a number of shrubs, many originating in Taiwan or Vietnam. These will soon be planted in



and around the recently restored Quarry Garden. The hellebores are already happily flowering in their new home. I'm sure Mrs Beale would be delighted.

Elaine has also been responsible for sourcing another 2,000 snowdrops -

funded by FoSE - which have been planted on the Drive to complement the 2,000 put in last year on the Rock-top Walk. These pictured are actually in the Cottage Garden, but it won't be long until the new planting has bulked up to make a similar show. Soon Standen will be as much famed for its snowdrops as it has become for its tulips.



AGM

FoSE's Annual General Meeting will be held in the Barn Café on Thursday 18th May at 6.30. Speaker to be confirmed. As usual, the business part of the meeting will be short. Do come along and support your committee.

Busy Bee Group

Since our last update, the Bee group have been busy preparing more hives for summer 2017. We have built a shed to house all our bee equipment which includes frames, wax, jars etc. We have kindly been donated several new hives from our former bee instructor Rick. We are aiming to have six hives active at the start of summer with a further two hives empty to accommodate random bee swarms. Our present two hives are active and healthy and we are confident that we will get a generous amount of honey from them in September.



Thanks to Richard Oxlade for this; we look forward to tasting the honey.

More storage space back-stage



Thanks to the generosity of Tony Hobbs, who donated material for the roof, (the timber being from the estate) the area by Hollybush barn now boasts a wood-store which will keep things dry for a generation at least. Ben is seen here hard at work on its construction.

Heralding sunny days

The final touch was added to the Rosery recently as the Armillary Sphere was mounted onto its plinth in the centre of the rose beds - and very smart it looks.

...this season's prize draw

was won by Sarah Game, who will receive a set of cards based on the water-colour pictures of Standen now on display in the Barn Café.

