

In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 50 May 2019

In this edition of In a Nutshell:
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EASY FUND-RAISING
NOW YOU'VE SEEN IT ALL
AND FINALLY...

FoSE calendar

13th July - Murder Mystery*

24th-28th June - Scone week*

5th November - Quiz

Please support our endeavours

Two years ago, FoSE hosted a Murder Mystery event performed by *Money Penny Productions* - <http://www.murdermysterytickets.co.uk/> The evening was a great success; a good time was had by all; we raised over £550 for Standen, and feedback included requests for a repeat. Ever willing to oblige, about a year ago, we booked *Money Penny Productions* to perform their new play - *Come Die with Me*- on 13th July, and we have been advertising it ever since. However, although we have been open for reservations since the end of March, we still have fewer than



30 requests for tickets. If this doesn't change soon, we will be forced to cancel the event, and instead of raising around £500 we may be faced with a penalty payment.

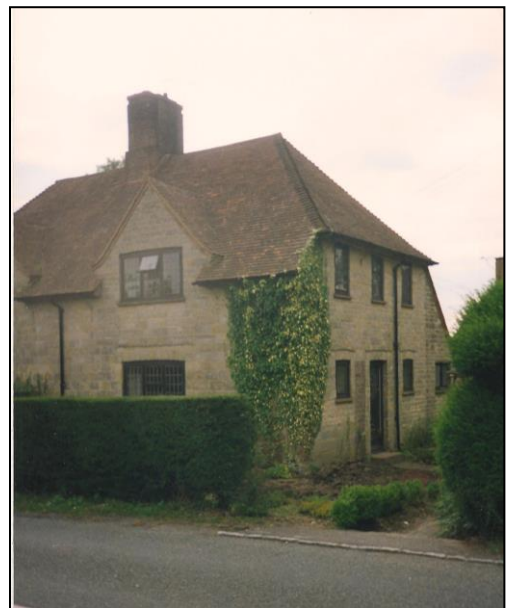
It may be that, as you have known about it for a long time, you just haven't got round to booking yet. If that is the case, I would be delighted to hear from you at newsletter@fose.org.uk with your reservation requests. As a reminder, tickets cost £25 (£20 cheaper than a similar event I saw advertised recently) for a three course meal with entertainment. The event is scheduled to take place in the **Barn Café** on **Saturday 13th July, 7 for 7.30**. (Contrary to recent publicity, the volunteers' party will not now take place the day before.) Tea and coffee will be served, but feel free to bring your own drinks as well. The piece is set post-war, so you may wish to dress accordingly, but there is no obligation to do so; you may just wish to enjoy others' dressing up abilities. You can book as an individual, a small group or a team of ten, but if you don't have a full table - and few people will have - we will organise teams and seating.

Please help us to make a success of this event, as it says above - **'Your FoSE needs you'**.

Living at Standen

Many of us will have whispered a silent thank you to Phillip Webb as we pass Hollybush Farmhouse. Had it not been for his vision, this fifteenth century house would have been long demolished, and a piece of Sussex history lost for ever. In addition, James would be homeless. He has been reflecting on the property, and has shared his knowledge with us.

One of the comments I get most frequently is that it "must be wonderful to live in such a beautiful place"



I have lived in National Trust tied accommodation since I was 2 when my dad started working as a gardener at Sheffield Park. I got my own first house with the Trust in 1994 and then part of the contract of the job at Standen was that I live on site. I suppose I have never really known anything different!

Over the years, the rules have tightened up on tied accommodation and now there are a maximum of three on any Trust property. One of the three has to be on site

at all times for security purposes and to respond to any issues. That means that when we are on duty we cannot go more than about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the house, as the pager system will not work further away than that. It can be quite restrictive and there is no popping to the shops if you have forgotten something!

The house I live in (Number 5 Standen Cottages) has been the residence of Standen's head gardener on and off for about 120 years and before that it was -



together with Number 6 (Ruth's house) known as Hollybush and was lived in by Yeoman farmers as far back as when it was built in 1453. We have records of quite a few of the people that have lived here over the centuries and also archaeological studies on the timbers in the house that have dated the main structure to the 1450s - we even know the timber was harvested near to Horsham. Some alterations were made in about 1600, but some of the timbers are over 900 years old and have been re-used from other buildings.

It is a very beautiful house from the outside, although it is very, very cold in the winter and has a healthy population of death-watch beetle! There has been no real maintenance since the 1950s and there are some very odd nooks and crannies! Living in it all the time, it is easy to forget how unusual it is! In the corner of the front bedroom there is a small cupboard and if you move the boxes away, at the back there is a door that opens to a set of steps leading up to a hidden room on the second floor.



The floorboards are very rotten so we can't go up there much, but through one of the holes in the timber can be seen a completely lost room between my house and Ruth's - I don't know when this was last used, but there is a shoe in the chimney breast in there - an ancient tradition to ward off evil. The floor in the front bedroom is made of very large elm planks - also dating from about 1600 and is very uneven - sometimes a little disconcerting when you get up in the middle of the night!



Although the front half of the house is very old - the rear section seems to have been rebuilt at around the time the stableyard was created, but I have found no definite record of this, making it a mere 125 years old! There is a door in this modern half that leads through the old back wall made of wattle and daub and into the cellar that runs under the northern half of the old building. It is too damp to use, but is carved from solid sandstone, which is what must have been used for the original foundations when the house was first built.

Scones are delicious - however you pronounce them!

These days there seems to be a national day for everything, but cream teas seemed an unlikely candidate. Nevertheless, someone in their wisdom has designated 28th June as *Cream Tea Day*. In honour of this auspicious event, the National Trust is asking supporter groups to 'host a scone-themed fundraiser' during the week leading up to Friday 28th. FoSE has decided it would like to contribute, so, on the Monday to Friday (24th-28th June), FoSE supporters will be placing scones, jam and cream at the disposal of staff and volunteers in both the house and stable tea rooms. Each scone and accoutrements will demand a donation of £2 to be placed in a nearby honesty box. You will have to slice your own scone, and add jam and cream - or cream and jam - yourself, and we will be trusting you not to hog too much of either, but I'm sure you will agree that this will be a delicious way of supporting the Friends of Standen Estate.

You can find out more about *The Great Scone Bake* at https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/great-scone-bake?campid=Print_Central_Summer_GSB_2019



Name that Camellia

At the very end of March, Standen was graced with a visit from the renowned *International Camellia Society*. The visit had been organised by Pat Short who presented Standen with the Marigold Assinder Challenge Cup a few years ago for the garden's first foray to the RHS show. The group had booked a garden tour, but clearly their main focus was going to be the Camellias. They were all very well-behaved and attentive for the first part of the tour, listening quietly and making appropriate appreciative noises, but once the Camellia Steps were reached, Dr Jekyll became Mr Hyde as the group grabbed branches of camellia plants to ascertain which root they belonged to and crashed into the undergrowth for closer examination. Andy and Rachel's faces were a picture as these erudite gardeners picked blooms from sacrosanct 'Beale' Camellias for identification. Much spirited discussion followed, with not all members of the group agreeing on the suggested

IDs. However, they all ultimately deferred to two very experienced Camellia growers, and the upshot was that Standen had confirmation from the highest authority of the names of several specimens, along with identification of many which Nick and Elaine had been unable to name.



Obviously the Beale Camellias were the high point for them, but they also wanted to see those which had been planted on the Top Terrace around nine years ago. Here, as well as naming the plants, they offered advice on care and told stories about various varieties. *Black Lace*, for example, which is actually crimson in colour, is so named because under certain conditions (even they weren't sure what) the veins and edges of the petals show black, giving the effect of lace. If anyone spots this unusual manifestation, please let the rest of us know.

At the end of their visit, they presented Andy and Rachel with a beautiful white Camellia, one of the earliest varieties to be grown in this country.

Gardening - or excavating

The Thursday Garden Group spent a day removing pernicious weeds and brambles from the steps up to the Rock Top Walk recently and along the top path. Rachel had also asked for the cage round one of the roses climbing up two big trees to be removed. No one is sure who put in the original metal stakes - possibly Harry Green - but whoever it was must have used a pile driver. Each stake was at least 15" into rock-solid earth, and it took the combined efforts of Carolyn, Martin and Roger to extricate the last of these, working and taking a breather in turn. Both roses are now attached to the trees and will hopefully thrive for a bit of tlc.



You're in safe hands

Those who were unable to make it to the FoSE AGM - and yes, the turn-out was a little disappointing, but thanks to those who did come - missed a stimulating talk from Keith Smith, one of 250 volunteers with the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Service.

He began by telling us that all Air Ambulance services in England operate as charities. In Scotland, they are funded by Health Scotland, but only because there are so many out of the way places in the Highlands and Islands. We are indeed fortunate to be living in the only region where the local Air Ambulance Service operates 24/7, 365 days a year. It was founded in 1989, and although it sometimes gets a government handout, there is no statutory funding available. There are two helicopters on call, one based at Redhill and the other at Rochester. Part of the reason for this is not because they serve different areas, but so that, if weather conditions preclude the operation of one, the other can step in.

Since the beginning of this year, the service has run 918 missions, and was in the East Grinstead area on 16th May, 19th and 27th April and three days in February (twice in the daytime and once at night). When you consider that it will only be called out for the most serious of life-threatening incidents, you realise what an important service it is. Each helicopter flies with a senior doctor and a paramedic - there are about 18 doctors and 14 paramedics currently with the service. Often, they complement the work of ambulances on the ground, but the helicopter crew functions more like a mobile A & E. Staff are 'loaned' for a term by the NHS.

As there are around 600,000 ambulance call-outs per year, incidents are triaged, and the helicopters will only be called on in the most serious RTAs, (44% of their shouts), major injuries (27%), and medical emergencies like stroke or anaphylactic shock (13%). The final percentage is made up of sport and leisure incidents and 'other'. A trained paramedic 'despatcher' makes the decision, and once it is made, the helicopter can be airborne in 4 minutes and be anywhere in the designated region within about 20 minutes. Pilots are usually ex-military, with 1,000 hours of flying experience, while doctors are usually senior registrars or consultants. The paramedics have at least 8 years of experience. The newer helicopters will have space inside to treat patients; currently most of the treatment is done outside - whatever the weather.

Patients are taken to a major trauma hospital: St George's and King's College in London, the Royal Sussex County, or more rarely Southampton General. There is also co-operation between different air ambulance regions, with teams supporting each other as the need arises.

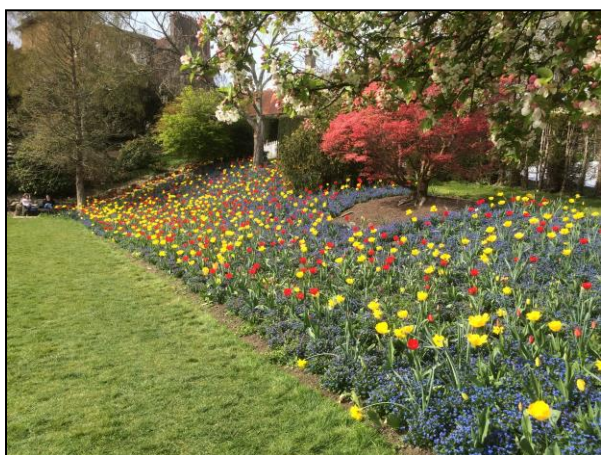
It is to be hoped that none of us will either need their services or need to call them, but it is comforting to know that technology now exists for personnel to turn on your phone camera when you dial 999, so that you can show them what's happening rather than try and explain. Of course, all this costs money - around £11 million a year, but they are proud of the fact that 85% of the money raised

goes directly to the service. If anyone would like to support the Air Ambulance Service, there is a collection box in the stable tea room.

Blooming marvellous



To all those volunteers who spent hours with Andy pruning, clearing and tidying in Rhodi Dell last year, look how your hard work has paid off. Thanks to Martin for capturing the trees in their full glory. Another area which has definitely had the wow effect recently is the sloping bed beside the Croquet Lawn, a blaze of colour with deep blue Forget-me-nots and red and yellow tulips.



Internet shopping anyone?



Just a reminder that FoSE has its own *Easy fund-raising* page. You can either access this by going to www.fose.org.uk and clicking on the logo at the bottom of the page or you can go directly to

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fostandenestate/> Even if it is a small purchase made this way, every little helps.

Stop press: garden staff discover hidden dance talents

The penultimate Thursday in May saw the Garden Group co-opted to clear the Conservatory in preparation for the Morris exhibition. Prickly cactus was wrapped in newspaper before removal, so that the thorns didn't wreak revenge at the disturbance. Furniture was taken outside to be stored elsewhere, apart from the chairs which were returned at the end of the day's work. Pots with a variety of plants were manhandled onto the trailer and taken to a temporary home in the nursery, and huge, glazed pots were brought in to house the Morris-inspired planting which will fill the space over the summer and autumn.

Before these could be installed, though, the Conservatory floor needed to be swept and washed (several times!). Then it had to be polished. Several volunteers, more accustomed to being on their knees in flower beds, found themselves applying wax polish to the quarry tiles. Once on, of course, it had to be taken off and the floor worked to smoothness. This is where Andy and Carolyn displayed hitherto unknown skills, donning luridly-coloured mop slippers, and skating and waltzing around the space until the floor shone. I eagerly await their appearance on *Strictly Come Dancing*.



... a little poetry

This appeared recently in my Inbox:

Botany

There should be no monotony
In studying your botany;
It helps to train
And spur the brain--
Unless you haven't gotany.
It teaches you, does Botany,
To know the plants and spotany,
And learn just why
They live or die--
In case you plant or potany.

You learn, from reading Botany,
Of woolly plants and cottony
That grow on earth,
And what they're worth,
And why some spots have notany.

You sketch the plants in Botany,
You learn to chart and plotany
Like corn or oats--
You jot down notes,
If you know how to jotany.

Your time, if you'll allotany,
Will teach you how and what any
Old plant or tree
Can do or be--
And that's the use of Botany!

--Berton Braley
Science News Letter
March 9, 1929