

The Lockdown Lighthouse

THE INTERIM NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN
and missing it loads



No 16 - 13th August 2020

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AND FINALLY...

Keep the money coming

A big thank you to those who responded to my plea in the last edition to pay this year's FoSE subs by BACs transfer and send the forms directly to Roy. I have the feeling there may be one or two who have actually paid twice for this year - whether intentionally or not, but if so, it can be sorted out later. If you haven't paid yet, (and I think there are over 30 of you still receiving a newsletter who come into that category) can I remind you that payment can be made directly into the FoSE Bank Account at Lloyds Bank: sort code 30-92-92, account number 01856808 with the reference 'Subs' followed by your name. Membership forms can be returned to Roy Page at membership@fose.org.uk. You can download a membership form from the 'about' page on the FoSE website at <http://www.fose.org.uk/about/>. If you don't wish to pay online, you can email me

for my address and send a cheque which I will pass on. With few staff and no budget, James really does need every penny we can raise.

News from the chalk face

No doubt, like me, your hopes rose at a message from Standen which began, 'Exciting news', only to have them dashed again when you realised that it only referred to the house. I'm sure we are all desperate to get back to getting our hands dirty again, to fighting brambles, weeding the heathers, mucking out the pond, emptying the charcoal burner, and all those other messy jobs which James delights in assigning to us. It isn't that we are not needed in the garden and grounds, but that systems have to be in place. The Trust cannot use volunteers to do work of staff who are being paid to stay at home under the furlough scheme. James has sent an update clarifying the situation, and letting us know that he'll get us back as soon as he can.

At Pam's suggestion, I am writing a short piece to explain what is going on with volunteering in the garden and woods at Standen. As you know, this has been a difficult time for many of the staff with redundancies looming for some. Once we have got through the initial phases of this, I will be looking to bring more outdoor volunteers back; however, the way that we run the volunteering will be changing. I will need to limit numbers in the Garden to five volunteers a day due to availability of tools, working safely with distancing requirements, space to have breaks and also the ability for me to organise work with less staff on the ground. In the woods, we cannot bring back any further people until Trudie returns from furlough, which could be a while yet. I will also be asking people to bring their own tools as much as possible as well as drinks, and we will need to work in areas away from those most frequented by visitors. There is also some online training to complete before you can come back.

I know this is all very frustrating, but please hang on in there; I am doing what I can to start getting you back and there will be more information in a weekly update soon.

Take home some colour

With fund-raising in mind, Carolyn has alerted me to the fact that she has several batches of surplus saved seed which she is willing to swap for a donation to FoSE. The suggestion is £1, but I'm sure she would accept more! She can make up packets of the following:

Opium Poppy 'Cherry Glow'
(from Thompson & Morgan originally)



Nigella, blue flowered,
from Standen Kitchen Garden

Nigella, white flowered



Allium christophii

Nectarascordum siculum (Sicilian Honey Garlic), as seen at Standen!



These last two will of course take time to flower from seed. If you are interested in any of the above seeds or if you also have any seeds which you can spare and which you think would sell, please let Carolyn know at carolyn.audrey72@gmail.com.

Seed swaps will take place in the Kitchen Garden on Thursdays, when Carolyn will be available to take your money and give you your seeds. Please ensure you have the right money as she won't be able to give change.



Did you guess it?

The tool which I wrongly identified last week was in fact a Cobbler's Fudge Wheel, and is used to mark the number of stitches on the sole of a shoe. Evidently it is the tool which makes the marks which I had always

assumed were purely decorative on high class shoes; they obviously have a more practical purpose.

Here are three more tools to test yourselves on, and I'll try



not to give the answers away this time.

Answers in the next edition.



You can see a fudge wheel in use at

[https://sk.pinterest.com/pin/566046246902037893/?amp_client_id=CLIENT_ID\(\)&mweb_unauth_id=%7B%7Bdefault.session%7D%7D&simplified=true](https://sk.pinterest.com/pin/566046246902037893/?amp_client_id=CLIENT_ID()&mweb_unauth_id=%7B%7Bdefault.session%7D%7D&simplified=true)

What the reset means

If, like me, you couldn't face reading all the detail about the Reset on the National Trust website, you can add your thanks to mine to Tim Roberson. He has combed through the information and reduced it to a manageable size. He also sent me *The Volunteers Explainer* as a pdf, so I will attach that with this newsletter. Here, though, are the key points in Tim's words and where to find more information.

I have been delving round the Trust's labyrinthine web site in order to get a better handle on their finances and the reset programme. It was nearly as bad an experience as trying to find out what properties are open and booking a visit with multiple links that did not always lead anywhere. So I put together the attached note with links that work (I hope). As you will see it leads to the same ResetVolunteers email address that Richard mentions in the last Standen bulletin, inviting us to comment. That said there is precious little detail to comment on.

Reset Programme

Many of you will have seen the press reports but as is often the case the original news release provides more clarity. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/press-release/national-trust-announces-spending-cuts-and-redundancies-in-face-of-coronavirus-losses>

There's lots more detail accessible on My Volunteering at <https://myvolunteering.nationaltrust.org.uk/resources/reset-programme> including a Q&A and a glossy Renewal Plan leaflet.

More detail still can be found on the right of the page at Job family explainers <https://myvolunteering.nationaltrust.org.uk/resources/reset-job-family-explainers>.

Sixteen separate job families are identified: of interest to most of us will be collections and house teams, gardeners or rangers, to show how these roles may change for staff and by implication for volunteers supporting them.

Volunteers are covered on a separate page that adds very little except that Trust will be consulting us. Trust wants to:

Involve volunteers in shaping what volunteering might look like in the coming months and years.

Understand the implications of the changes on volunteering and individual volunteers.

Work with volunteers to find new, flexible, mutually beneficial opportunities.

Responses to resetvolunteers@nationaltrust.org.uk.

He did also speculate, with his cynic's hat on, that the responses page might have been set up to 'gather a lot of incoherent grumbles that could then be ignored', but then added: 'You might think that; I couldn't possibly comment'. Now where have I heard that before?

Carolyn's colourful carrot crop

Last year, FoSE gave the Kitchen Garden money to buy hoops and net to keep the dreaded carrot fly away. These have been in situ all season and are paying dividends. Here's what Carolyn has to say about them:

I wanted to say thank you to the committee for the funds for the hoops and netting for the carrots and leeks end of last year/earlier this year. I harvested the first carrots today (3rd August), sown on 5th June at the end of my first week back at work, and they were lovely. They even kept their colour when steamed.



Mathematical geniuses

Anne's joke printed below caused me a smile. Could be called a case of just desserts:

A lawyer writes a letter to his wife Janie... My Dear Janie, You will surely understand that I have certain needs that you, being 57 years old, can no longer satisfy. I am very happy with you and I value you as a good wife. Therefore, after reading this letter, I hope that you will not wrongly interpret the fact that I will be spending the evening with my 18 year old secretary at the Comfort Inn Hotel. Please don't be upset----I shall be home before midnight. When he came home late that night, he found the following letter on the dining room table: My "Dearest Husband", I received your letter and thank you for your honesty about my being 57 years old. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that you are also 57 years old. As a maths teacher at our local college, I would like to inform you that while you read this, I will be at the Hotel Fiesta with Michael, one of my students, who is also the assistant tennis coach. He is young, virile, and like your secretary, is 18 years old. As a successful lawyer who has an excellent knowledge of maths, you will understand that we are in the same situation,

although with one small difference - 18 goes into 57 a lot more times than 57 goes into 18. Therefore, I will not be home until sometime tomorrow.

Many of you, I'm sure, will have seen Donald Trump's bizarre performance in interview insisting that the USA was 'lower than the world' in terms of coronavirus statistics. An American comedian does a wonderful parody of the interview in question, which is very entertaining - or would be if the situation wasn't so serious. It is at <https://mashable.com/video/jimmy-fallon-trump-interview-parody/?europa=true>

Back where it belongs

You may recall seeing a photo of Roger Ohison's superb piece of craftsmanship on a section of the trunk of the fallen espalier apple tree in the Kitchen Garden. His sculpture has now been returned to Standen and has a temporary home in the Stable Yard. James is hoping to have it displayed in the new Visitor Reception area, and is hoping to have a brass plaque made which will detail its history - and recognise its creator, no doubt.



Guess who's coming to dinner

Nancy has a trail camera installed in her garden, which has produced some interesting results recently.



*Hello!
I haven't done a great deal in the garden lately, so I thought that I might speak about my love/hate relationship with the local wildlife. As you will see from the pictures taken in the*

garden by my 'trail camera', we have several nightly visitors. Daphne and

Doris deer, no doubt relations of Deirdre at Standen, are frequent visitors during the day as well as night-time. So far they have decimated the roses that I had in pots, ready to plant out into the garden, the tops of the Persicaria and Cornus, nibbled Geranium, Weigela, shrub and ground cover Roses....the list goes on, I keep finding new victims all the time. The other morning one of the deer ran right across my path, I had disturbed her nibbling, she was so pretty and graceful. I thought how lovely she was and then I saw what she had for breakfast!

I was surprised to see the badger, as I hadn't noticed any particular damage, usually pots have been knocked over.

There are always digging sites but they could be caused by pheasants, rabbits and fox too. The fox comes often; we have so many rabbits and mice for her to eat!



Rabbits are endemic in the garden, at the moment they are really enjoying all the windfall apples, which I throw into a tub, the rabbit in the picture is taking them out again! I feed the birds, which also suits the mice and

occasionally, rats, who love the fallen seeds under the feeders. We do get the occasional Weasel too but they are quite shy and move really fast if they sense you nearby.

All the wildlife eat or dig up something in the garden, I think to a certain extent, you have to give in gracefully, otherwise it would become too stressful! Really, how lucky to have all this wildlife on the doorstep. (Except the rats, which I don't like, although they are very intelligent).



Of course we have many different varieties of bird too. The most spectacular being several types of raptors. Buzzards are the most numerous and have wiped out the local pheasant population, although my pet Squeaky, is still living happily in the garden. You can watch several of them working as a team, some flushing out the pheasant from under the hedges and others swooping down for the kill, poor pheasants! Red Kite visit as well, the other day one tried to take a crow in the air, but the crow managed to fly underneath him and got away.

My favourite is the Sparrow hawk, whose flight pattern is so spectacular. The one who frequents the garden flies between the slats on our five bar gate, to catch some poor unsuspecting small bird. A few weeks ago, there was a real commotion outside; she had brought down a crow, rather ambitious I thought - the crow was almost as big as her. They fought for some time and ended up in my front garden, the crow eventually got away and flew off down the road, with the hawk in pursuit. I don't know the outcome.

Over the years I have had some really great wildlife moments, I'm sure I could have won prizes....if only I constantly had my camera to hand!

A small anecdote: My youngest grandchild Oscar, aged 5years and a bit of a character (his sayings and observations on life are well known amongst friends and family) visited us last week on that very hot Friday. He and I decided on a socially distanced walk up the farm track to see the horses. On getting to a field with two horses, one called Milly, we couldn't recollect the name of the other. Oscar remarks,

"This is ridiculous Grandma, it's all the fault of the virus".

"How so" says I.

" Well we haven't been able to walk together for such a long time, we've forgotten the name. I wish this virus would just go away".

Amen to that! Keep safe and well, Nancy

...More out of the mouths of babes

My daughter is just beginning to potty-train her younger son, giving all the encouragement parents have offered since time immemorial in such circumstances. She had taken him up to the bathroom to change him into swimming gear prior to his going in the paddling pool and took the opportunity to have a quick wee herself.

Leon regarded her solemnly and then, nodding wisely, pronounced,

'Very good!'