

The Lockdown Lighthouse

THE INTERIM NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN
and missing it loads



No 17 - 27th August 2020

In this edition of The Lockdown Lighthouse:

COMEDY CORNER

NEW PRUNERS

NAME THAT TOOL AGAIN

VELOCIRAPTOR

STANDEN THROUGH THE YEARS

A BIT OF WHIMSEY

SOME GOOD NEWS AT LAST

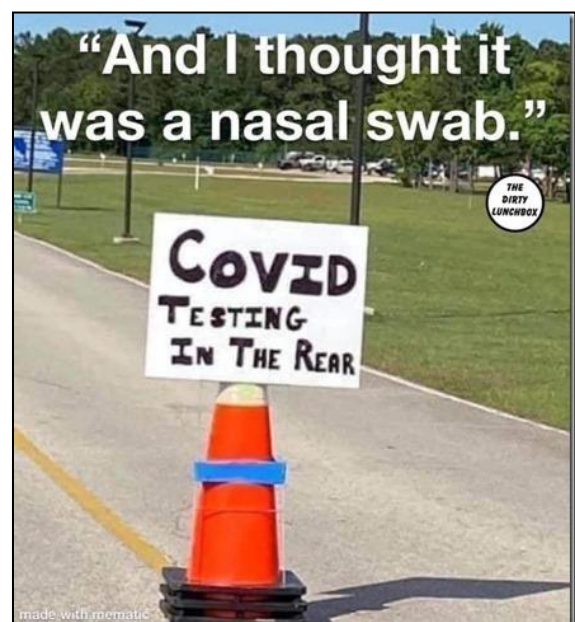
HOLLYBUSH AND ROCKINGHILL

AND FINALLY

Laughter is the best medicine

Anne has sent me a good haul of jokes recently, visual and verbal, so I thought I would start with them:

An Irishman walked into a bar in Dublin, ordered three pints of Guinness and sat at the back of the room, drinking a sip out of each one in turn. When he finished them, he came back to the bar and ordered three more.





The bartender approached and told him: "You know, a pint goes flat after I draw it, and it would taste better if you bought one at a time."

The Irishman replied: "Well, you see, I have two brothers. One is in America, the other is in Australia, and I'm in Dublin. When we all left

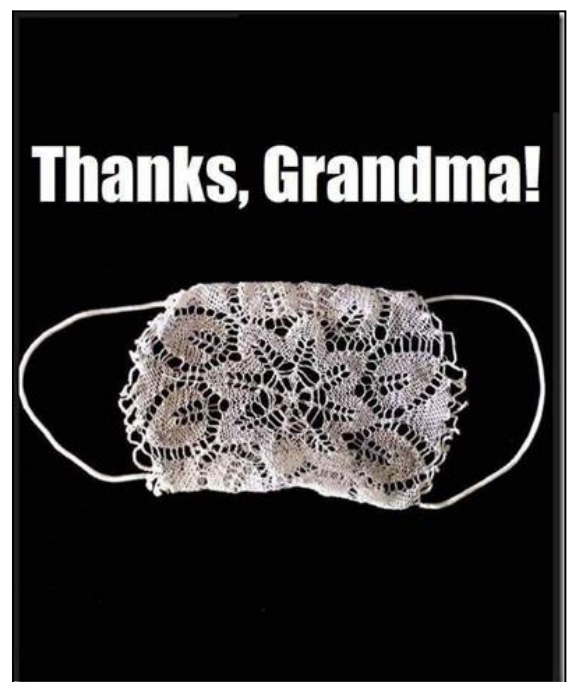
home, we promised that we'd drink this way to remember the days we drank together. So I drink one for each me brothers and one for meself."

The bartender admitted that this was a fine tradition, and left it there. The Irishman became a regular in the bar, and always drank the same way: he ordered three pints and drank them in turn. One day, he came in and ordered two pints. All the other regulars took notice and fell silent.

When he came back to the bar for the second round, the bartender said: "I don't want to intrude on your grief, but I wanted to offer my condolences on your loss."

The Irishman looked quite puzzled for a moment, then a light dawned and he laughed. "Oh, no, everybody's just fine," he explained.

"It's just that my wife had us join that Baptist Church and I had to quit drinking. Hasn't affected my brothers though."



And on a similar theme:

A lady went to the bar on a cruise ship, and ordered a Scotch, with two drops of water. The bartender gave her the drink, and she said, "I'm on this cruise to celebrate my 80th birthday, and it's today."

*The bartender said, "Well, since it's your birthday, this one's on me."
As the lady finished her drink, a woman to her right, said, "I'd like to buy you a drink, too."*

The lady said, "Thank you, how sweet of you. OK, then, Bartender, I want another Scotch, with two drops of water."

**Me: Alexa, what's
the weather going to
be this weekend?**

**Alexa: Why? Where
do you think you're
going?**

"Coming up," said the bartender.

*As she finished that drink, a man to her left said, "I'd like to buy you a drink too."
The lady said, "Thank you very much, my dear. Bartender, I'll have another Scotch, with two drops of water."*

*"Coming right up," the bartender said.
As he gave her the drink this time, he said, "Ma'am, I'm dying of curiosity. Why the Scotch with only two drops of water?"*

*The old woman giggled, and replied,
"Sonny, when you're my age, you've
learned how to hold your liquor. Water, however, is a whole other issue!"*

And possibly slightly less tasteful:

A man was playing golf one day and he got lost. He saw a young lady playing up ahead of him and went over to her and said, 'Can you please help me? I don't know what hole I'm on.'

She told him, 'You are one hole behind me; I'm on 7 and you are on 6.' He thanked her and carried on playing golf. On the back nine, he got lost again. He saw the same woman and went over to her again,

'I'm sorry to bother you but I'm lost again, can you please tell me what hole I'm on?' She told him, 'You are one hole behind me; I'm on 14 and you are on 13.'

Again he thanked her and continued playing golf. When he finished he saw her in the clubhouse. He went over to her and asked if he could buy her a drink for helping him out. She accepted. As they were drinking and chatting he asked her what she did for a living. 'I'm in sales,' she said.

He replied, 'No kidding so am I, what do you sell?'

She said, 'It's too embarrassing to tell.'

But after he kept pleading to know what she sold she said she'd tell him if he promised not to laugh. He promised.

She said, 'I sell tampons.' The old man immediately fell to the floor laughing his socks off.

She said, 'You promised you wouldn't laugh!'

'I'm so sorry, he replied, 'but I couldn't help it. I sell toilet paper; I'm still one hole behind you!'



FoSE's latest purchase



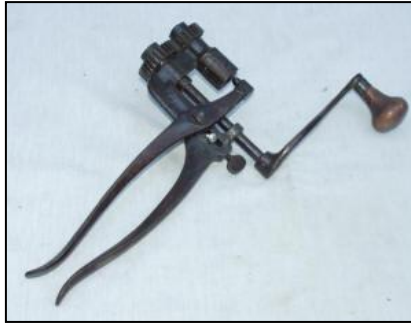
One of James' recent requests for funding was for a pair of long-handled pruners. These have just arrived at Standen, and Rachel and Amy immediately went to try them out, although Storm Francis prevented them from a full-scale operation.

However, judging from the smiles on their faces, it looks as if they are going to enjoy using their latest toy. No doubt the smiles are also influenced by the fact that we have finally had some decent rain, so maybe they will be able to focus on tasks other

than watering for a while.

More tools for thought

Last week's mystery tools were:



a circle cutter drill bit

a waggon wheel wrench

a floor board saw

The middle 'weapon' is for loosening or tightening bolts on wagon wheels - presumably not the chocolate kind.

Here is this week's selection:



They all look pretty vicious to me. Remind me not to upset Graham when we are back at Standen.

Names and uses will be given in the next edition. Once again, thanks to Graham for providing us with a brain teaser.



The Space Between

If you read this story by Pat Jilks, you'll maybe think there are worse fates than catching Covid 19:

'Well, I'm damned!' said the Professor.

*'Now, how are we going to explain **that!**'*

Grace had always had a gift. Her hearing was exceptional. She had perfect pitch and could hear beyond the ends of the 'normal' hearing spectrum for humans. This was not always a good thing because she was often irritated by high pitched sounds that others could not hear. For instance, she could hear the television in the next door flat because there was a very high and penetrating hum that she could hear through the wall but, when she had complained about it to her friends, nobody else could hear it. All manner of sounds from masts, emitters and receivers pierced her ears at times and, sometimes, actually hurt. The foam earplugs used for industry that cut out the high frequencies but left a person able to hear speech worked well enough to help cope with this.

Very low sounds didn't trouble her so much but were worse when they did because the vibrations from these were definitely painful. After all, in the past, when office staff in some buildings had become unwell, it had been found that the cause was the air conditioning that operated on very low frequencies. In fact, at too low a frequency a loud sound, although not being heard with the ears, could kill a person through vibration set up in their internal organs and over-heating them. Grace had often thought that it might be possible to commit the perfect murder in this way.

There was, however, a benefit to this doubtful 'gift' which came in the course of her chosen career. She worked in sound technology and, at present, she was doing research at a University. The previously mentioned Professor was in residence at this same University, but their paths had not, so far, crossed.

This morning, it was a beautiful day. As she walked to the sound lab where she was doing her research, Grace felt most reluctant to spend the time indoors. But why do so? The work she engaged on at the moment could be done out of doors just as well. There was only her laptop and recording equipment involved which could be taken outside easily.

So, shortly after that, Grace was sitting comfortably next to a small stream that flowed in a remote corner of the University grounds. Nobody else was around outside and she concentrated on writing up notes on her laptop. She stopped for a while to take a break and listened to the sounds of the stream gurgling by. She felt a bit sleepy and was just on the point of drifting off when the sounds caught her attention. As she listened, it seemed that the continuous and mixed harmonics of the stream slowed, until she had the impression that the sound was no longer continuous but had spaces in between.

Grace was intrigued by this and used her 'gift' to separate the sounds. She centred on a deep note and was able to mentally slow it down until the spaces in between became larger. This was fascinating. She concentrated on a space and mentally hovered inside it.

Then, it felt as if she was embedded within a structure. She became aware of things she had never known before. No longer was there an up and down or side to side but every other impossible direction as well. Past, present and future merged and she herself seemed to disappear.

Then, there was a jolt. There was a blackness surrounding her, which slowly cleared to a mist and then clarified

Grace was lying face down on the ground. She had no idea what had just happened. The first thing she saw was her sound equipment and mobile phone lying next to her so she thought that she must have had a blackout. But then, she noticed that she was not lying on grass. There were plants around her but more like lichens, ferns and horsetails. She sat up and, surrounding her were huge trees, but not quite trees. Grace had travelled to New Zealand with her parents when she was younger and these trees were more like some of the ones she had seen in the 'bush' there. It went through her mind that, before Europeans descended on New Zealand, there had been no grass or familiar vegetation but more like a person would find in the Jurassic era.

Something rustled and scuttled near her and she turned to look, just in time to see a strange looking creature disappearing into the undergrowth with her mobile phone clenched in its pointed jaws.

There was a sound like thunder and the ground vibrated. The vegetation to one side of her shook and she saw a giant head emerging at the height of a house. She recognised that all right. Like most children, she had adored dinosaurs when young and her favourite had been Tyrannosaurus Rex. And here it was but this was not a picture in a book but seemed very real. 'Don't be silly,' Grace thought to herself, 'It must be a dream or hallucination.' Could you smell things in your dreams though, like the background scent of something she couldn't quite identify and now, as the Tyrannosaurus approached, a smell more like rotting meat. And would childhood memories of this creature include the fact that it was covered by what looked like furry feathers and more brightly coloured than she would have expected?

Grace remained rigid with fear as the dinosaur thundered out into the clearing where she still sat. She was convinced that she would be trampled but, if it was a dream, surely she could not die? A giant leg brushed her and landed on her sound equipment, crushing it into the ground but she had not been noticed and Tyranno moved past her.

She stood up, a bit shakily and wondered when this dream was going to end. Then, the hairs on the back of her neck stood up and she felt that she was being watched. She began to stumble along through the vegetation but knew that

something was following her. She tried to run and could see the bushes and tree ferns thinning in front of her. Then, she broke out of the forest and was in a scrub covered plain. She ran. And ran.

Finally, Grace stopped and looked around her. She couldn't see anything, but still sensed that she was being watched. She felt desolate and very afraid. If this was a dream, she wished that she could wake up. The trouble was, it didn't feel anything like a dream. It was too real - the warm but strange wind in her face, the smell of - well, she wasn't sure what the smell was, only that it was a distinct one that she couldn't place. Probably, she thought, that it contained things that she had never before smelled. But, that was ridiculous. This **must** be a dream. It just didn't make sense. If she sat on that rock over there and shut her eyes then, when she opened them, she would be back at the University.

So, she sat on the rock and shut her eyes. She drifted off to sleep for a moment and started to fall forwards, which jerked her awake again. She opened her eyes with a start and saw - not the familiar and longed for grass and trees of the campus but other eyes. These eyes surrounded her, at a distance of perhaps 50 metres and they belonged to six animals that were familiar to her.

Grace heard the voice of her teacher at school. 'These animals were possibly the best hunters in those times. They hunted in packs and it is thought that they worked together in an intelligent way - the wolf packs of the dinosaurs.'

'Velociraptors,' thought Grace hopelessly. 'How interested I was in them particularly. I imagined that they were an intelligent animal that could have evolved into something special if the disaster had not occurred that wiped them out.'

Intelligent they were. She could see it in their eyes as they slowly closed in on her.

They stopped, puzzled. It was obvious they had not seen a species of animal such as herself and, for a moment, she hoped that they would become unsure and back off.

Then, they talked between themselves. At least, that was the only thing it could have been. One looked at another and made sounds and the other replied with other sounds. Soon, all of them were chattering away, looking at her, at each other and back to her again.

The one, who seemed to be a leader gave what could only be termed a shrug and a movement towards her. They all moved as one and the last thing that Grace saw was a sea of teeth.

'Well, I'm damned,' said the Professor again. And he looked in disbelief at the item embedded in the rock that was definitely part of the Jurassic Strata of the Dorset Coast.

Held fast by the rock but partially sticking out, was a mobile phone.

Spot the Difference



The first picture was taken in 2013, with just a delicate frosting of snow on the rocks along the drive. The bed in front isn't as bare now.

Idly looking through some of the photos I have taken at Standen since the Restoration began, I thought it might be an idea to publish a few to remind us of some of the changes which have taken place, or simply to remind us of key events and beautiful plants.



The second shows the lovely Magnolias in the Little Orchard in 2014, but the foreground planting has changed.

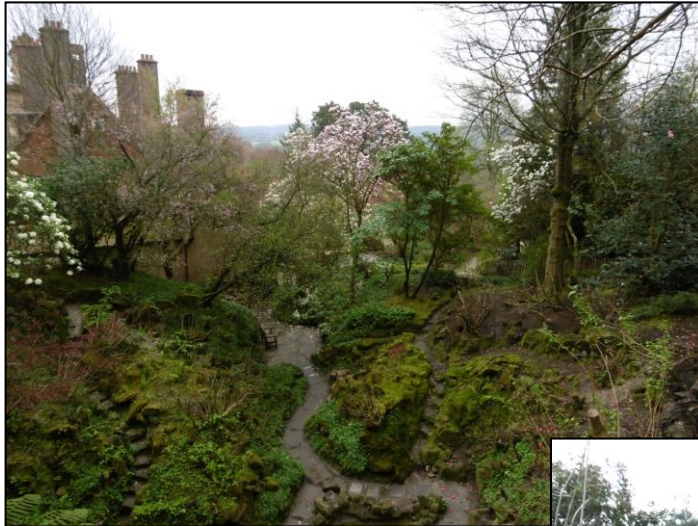


In 2015, the greenhouses were spanking new, and considerably less full than they are these days.

Before the fruit cage was erected, the pots, left in the open, were frequently raided by squirrels.

This was the view from the Rock-Top Walk, shortly after the completion of the viewing platforms, and was taken in 2016.





The Quarry Garden was looking particularly lovely in April 2017, like a fairy garden, its flanks still neatly manicured following restoration work.

Did we plant these Iris Reticulata, flowering here in 2018, or were they part of the inspiration which led James to order all those hundreds of bulbs?



2019 was the year of the bedding. This photo was taken in January that year, just after we had all finished the marathon plantathon. The result was certainly worth the effort, though - even if my knees don't agree.

Ke-mo-sah-bee

Now no doubt not politically correct, I suspect many of us played 'Cowboys and Indians' as children. Bob Fielden recalled doing so, and the rules that pertained regarding masks:

When I was a child playing cowboys and Indians, it was great fun to wear a mask, but you had to take it off when going into the shop.

Funny how things change. As Bob says, though:

It is not much fun wearing a mask in or out of the shop!!!

I'm with him there. I suspect we would also have been in trouble if we discarded our masks in the street.



Research unwrapped

However good we are at keeping up with the news, it's a bit of an emotional see-saw, as we are bombarded with figures - often unwelcome ones - and a lot of confusing information about Covid as our scientists and politicians do their best to understand and control this strange new virus. Dr John Campbell is a retired Nurse Teacher who has made it his mission to digest all the research papers which have come out on the Coronavirus and present them in a way that Jo Public can understand, in regular and wide-ranging videos.

A few days ago, his video contained what he described as 'a torrent of good news'. If you haven't seen it, you can find it at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5Z6wdu1eIO>

In my opinion, it's worth 35 minutes of anyone's time as it's so nice to hear something upbeat about the battle against Covid. However, if you don't want to watch the whole video, here are the headlines:

- There is now good evidence that antibodies to Covid do confer immunity. This suggests that vaccines should be effective.
- In large, crowded urban centres, considerable percentages of the population have now had Covid. London stands at about 17%, but in Mumbai and New Dehli, nearly one in five have had it, not herd immunity by any stretch, but enough to help slow the spread of the virus.

Woods Group wanderings

Alison Smith met up with two Woods Group friends recently, and sent some pictures and an update on the woods:

I met up with two of my woods group friends, Tina & Anne, for a wander round





Hollybush & Rockinghill earlier this week and thought you might enjoy some of the views ...

We found some interesting new growth where we haven't been disturbing the woodpiles, and the blackberries are fruiting well round the barn as there is no-one there to cut them back.

Tina is standing under the barn roof that was so pointlessly



vandalised earlier in the year, but it's just as well there are no school groups - look at the dipping pond - none of us have ever seen it actually dry before.

The volunteers that are back working in the woods are doing a good job though, all the boardwalks and paths were clear and tidy; we think Roger O & his brush-cutter are probably responsible for some of that!!

Maybe, hopefully, see some more friends soon, who knows...



And finally...

Following the furore over the A-level results, my son sent the family a WhatsApp message informing us that Dominic **RAAB** has been downgraded to Dominic **RBBC**, Quick as a flash, my daughter responded asking whether Doris was still running the country, It took me a minute!