

In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 56 May 2021

In this edition of In a Nutshell:

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STANDEN - GARDEN AND ESTATE
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AND FINALLY...

A return to normality

Well, of a sort. It's so good to see so many Standen volunteers back in the gardens and woods they love, even if groups have had to be split somewhat to make sure they are not too big to be safely spread out. Garden groups are at work on several days, with the Tuesday group concentrating on the area round the house and the Thursday lot up on the Top Terrace.





Two rank amateurs are doing their best in the Nursery, and the Woods Group are also hard at work under Trudie's direction, although you might think, looking

at some of the photos, that the volunteers are just sitting around enjoying each other's company, and



a spot of lunch. It also feels good to be writing a newsletter about all that is going on at Standen. It is certainly wonderful to be back.

The cut flower volunteers also look pleased to be amongst the blooms.



Looks like they are the only ones doing any work! No doubt the Thursday group had earned their sit down, though, judging by the work they have done under Amy's watchful

eye.

Amy's well-kept secret

Those of us wondering how someone as slim as Amy manages to do all the back-breaking work she completes, now know the answer. It's a



cinnamon bun covered with icing when she starts her shift in the morning.

Maybe this is why she's able to heft huge logs with such apparent ease. I wonder if she has ever gone in for tossing the caber.



Community support

One of the nice things about volunteering at Standen is how everyone rallies round in a crisis. One instance of this was the way FoSE members responded to the Boardwalk appeal. Another is the way people have contributed to try and make up some of the shortfall in James' budget. James has this to say on the subject:

I want to thank everyone so much who has donated plants and seeds to Standen over the past few months. I think that we have more plants ready to go out into the garden than ever before and I am really hoping for an amazing summer display. We have had seeds, seedlings, cuttings, small plants, bulbs, corms and tubers. Most recently I have picked up two very large pine trees from someone in East Grinstead who heard our request. I wish I had taken someone with me to load them into the truck as they were pretty heavy - these alone would cost £400-500 each, and altogether I think we have been given nearly £2,500 worth of plants (based on wholesale prices), which is incredible and makes me so proud to be part of such a wonderful group of people at such a wonderful place.

Working down in the nursery on a Tuesday, I've noticed that most weeks there are new seed packets, or plant donations of some kind that need to be found a home until planting out time.

Mother Nature's bounty

Despite everything that Covid has thrown at us humans, and despite yet another year of unseasonably odd weather patterns, Standen gardens and estate are putting on a splendid show as usual.



This lovely orange Geum caught Carolyn's eye on Grandfather's Walk.



The Clematis flowering on the Conservatory is also putting on a



good show while the Wisteria on the Lavender Lawn has finally come into flower, later than most years. It has been painstakingly 'cloud-pruned' by Pat and Terry Felgate, and their hard work is certainly paying off. For those who don't know (and I was one of them) cloud pruning is a Japanese method of training trees and shrubs into shapes resembling clouds. It

is known as 'Niwaki', the translation of which is 'garden tree'. The style is said to depict the distilled essence of the tree.

In the wider estate the bluebells in Rockinghill Wood are performing their usual magic. Is there anything more guaranteed to make people feel hopeful than the sight of an English bluebell wood in full glory? It's good management of the tree cover which allows such beautiful glades to establish.



The north wind did blow

April was ridiculously dry and May is proving annoyingly wet. In between, though, was the wind. I suspect many of us listened to windows rattling a few weeks back, and worried about roof tiles and fences as we lay in bed. At Standen, the damage to planting wasn't too bad, though the new Junipers beside the Croquet Lawn did need settling back in, re-

staking and mulching.

The major area of damage, though, was to the compost bins. Who would have believed the wind, in attempting to lift the roof, would be able to move the huge railway sleepers which divide the bays? Fortunately they settled on the girders, rather than crashing down in between. It will take some heavy machinery to get them back in place, I suspect.



Work is underway

Trudie and Richard were less than amused a few weeks back when the woods received a visit from some cows belonging to the neighbouring farm.

Unfortunately, as a result, a large section of the boardwalk was smashed, and as timber had already run out at that point staff had to start ripping up the affected

section to make it safe for the visitors. Fortunately, more by luck than judgment on the cows' part, this was a section already scheduled for replacement.

It seems, because of lock down, there has been a greater footfall in the woods which has worn out large sections of netting, causing a number of accidents. So the wire netting is also being removed.

Happily, the last of the timber funded by generous FoSE members arrived last week and so work is now beginning on rebuilding the boardwalk.

Pine trees for Standen



As James has said, he was contacted by a local resident with the unusual and very welcome offer of two pine trees. Apparently, the owner had visited Sheffield Park at some time in the 1970s, and picked up and taken home a pine cone. From this, he successfully propagated a pine tree. Over the decades, the tree grew too big for his garden, and had to be taken down about 5 years ago. However, having done it once, he decided to propagate again, and the result is these two, beautiful pine trees, which he has donated to Standen.

He didn't know the name of the original tree, and isn't even sure it is still there, so James is

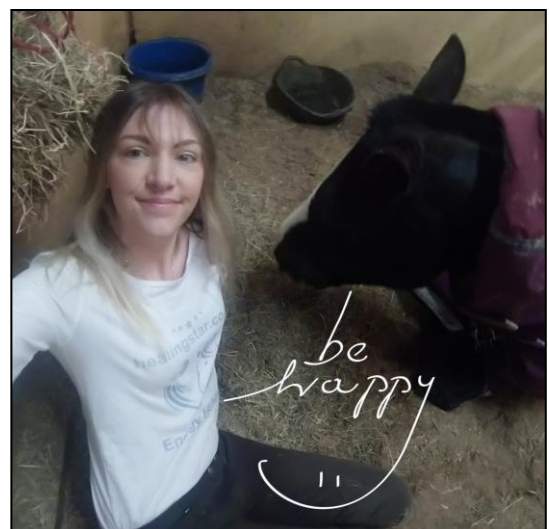
now on a mission to identify them.

Dreams really can come true

It would seem that Bleau is really relishing her new job. She has written a detailed update to tell us all about it.

Hello lovely FoSE members.

As I write this (Wed 19 May) I can't believe it's been 6 weeks already since my last day at Standen and week 4 of the new job. I had a gap in-between to look after my landlord's farm and then to Dartmoor. It'd been 4 months, so it was great to see mummy, animals and



have adventures. Lots of walking, riding and another wild camp out woopie 😊 Too chilly for a swim in the Dart but maybe this week when I briefly pop back again, we'll see!

So, I said I'd update you as to how the job has been going. Well what can I say? I feel I have walked into a dream or a very wonderful movie and someone's going to wake me up soon! I'm often thinking is this really for real? But then again dreams can come true can't they? With hard work, dedication and a lot of trust and self-belief, you can manifest them. Well whatever I have been doing these last few years is now really paying off and I am so excited about it evolving further and enjoying this very happy and empowered feeling.



Basically....I LOVE the job. The location is stunning. I work in an oast house on an old farm near Groombridge. The drive is pretty and passes Plawhatch so even better! Lunch breaks are very

peaceful and spent by a pretty pond gazing at fishies. We have a resident and very cute baby goose at the moment. The days/hours are perfect for me fitting my personal clients for healing in, my garden job and art work. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays are vet days but no more getting to my desk early as I don't start there until 10:30! Result!

It's a small team, all in all 5 of us and we all get on so well. Birgit and I get on really well and often I'm giving her healing in her lunch break if it's a really busy day. Even more lovely is being sent up to the nearby farm shop to buy brownies for us all. Yum. She looks after us well 😊

She is really supportive of my healing work and now wants me working in my 3 days as an animal healer as much as possible with me doing the PA work/helping her in the consultation room and doing prescriptions in the rest of the time.



I have had a few animal clients already and often called in spontaneously to assist Birgit with nervous animals too. I love working in tandem with her it feels a real honour. We have another vet who helps when Birgit is away and she specialises in holistic veterinary treatment for horses. We get on really well so fingers crossed that relationship will blossom more and she may be able to help me reach out to more horses which as so many of you know is my big passion.

I love making up the Chinese herbs, wow they smell great, though I must watch how many I plunge my nose into as I think they can make me too giggly. I definitely need to get an apron too, tend to get a bit messy! Still learning all the names of them, the homeopathic remedies and western herbs. Literally, upstairs is like an Aladdin's cave of bottles and pots! There are hundreds!



Tomorrow (Thursday 20th) I'm manning the fort alone so I must be doing OK for them to leave me to it. The first 2 weeks my mind was absolutely frazzled as I haven't been a new girl for so long, but glad to say its sinking in now. Very impressed with their veterinary database and system, if only My Volunteering could have been like that! Occasionally when I pick up the phone I go to say Standen NT which is quite funny. Just habit I guess but that'll stop soon.



I have been a bit of a cry baby on a few occasions. I am finding that the animals release a lot through me and I suddenly during healing, find the tears coming up. But Birgit is always there to reassure me and says it's a good thing and not to be sorry for crying. Its such a rewarding job seeing the results of the healing and holistic treatments so quickly. What also seems to be happening a lot too, is out of

work, my time with my horse share, Guinness, is becoming more magical. When

I spend time with him he now gets down and lies next to me or falls asleep in my arms. It's too beautiful for words. He's the love of my life that boy. Anyway, I'll stop there and leave you on an even higher note which is my T-shirt. I can't stop wearing it. It was a dream to get to the stage where one day I might design my own uniform for my healing work and for wearing at fairs and so here it is...the first of many other potential garments though I might not go as far as a baseball cap, don't worry! Taking orders for anyone who wishes to wear them too...(work it!) and in the process of ordering jute bags for goody bag give aways for when the mind body spirit fairs start. So excited and mind full of ideas.

Sending you all bundles of love, a few photos below and I'll look forward to seeing you all when I get a momento to visit.

*Take good care all, Bleau (and in case you are intrigued to find out more....
www.healingstar.co.uk/www.birgitholisticvet.co.uk*

I'm sure we all hope she continues to find the role as inspirational and satisfying.

AGM update

This year's AGM was a Zoom event - just as well in view of the unseasonably windy weather. It was good to see so many areas of Standen represented. Thanks to all who attended. As I couldn't twist anyone's arm hard enough to get them to volunteer as Chair, I will be continuing for one more year, but that's it! Susan Hodgson has stepped down after a second stint of service, but Bob Fielden has joined the committee in her place, while Nancy Watkins becomes 'official' minutes secretary, a role she has already been carrying out on and off for a while.

For those who have forgotten who is on the committee, after such a long absence, here is the list: James Masters - President; Pam Griffiths - Chair; Roy Page - Membership secretary; Anne Scutt - Treasurer; Nancy Watkins - Secretary; Roger Ohison - Sussex Lund Liaison; Jackie Apps; Angela Hogman; Martin Tasker.

At the end of the meeting, James was able to tell us that some progress has been made in terms of his role following the Standen/Nymans merger. He is to have much more of a voice - and therefore be able to be a voice for Standen - than was indicated by the merger document recently produced by Zara Luxford - which is good news for all of us.

And finally...

Having disturbed the hen blackbird which was nesting in the metal shed in the nursery area, we were very pleased to see that she was still sitting on her three

eggs the following week. The eggs hatched, and she was able to get all three to the point of fledging. However, recently, James has only seen one of the three chicks in the area. He says it's much bigger. Hopefully this is because, with the disappearance of its siblings, it is getting Mum's undivided attention when it comes to mealtimes. Tabby has been seen in the area a few times. Let's hope she wasn't responsible for the demise of the other two chicks.