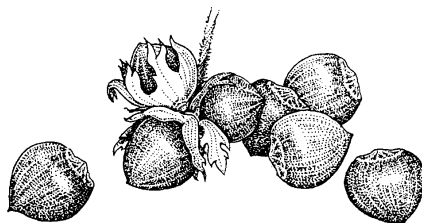


In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 69 July 2023

In this edition of In a Nutshell

FoSE calendar

NEST ID'd

Autumn Quiz - 4th October

QUIZZY WEDNESDAY*

FRUIT CAGE FUNDING

CALLIGRAPHER NEEDED

IT HAPPENED IN THE KITCHEN GARDEN

MOTH ID'd

ANOTHER MYSTERY

TULLY REMEMBERED

BACK IN BUSINESS

AND FINALLY...

Maternal moorhen

You may recall this picture from the last newsletter - showing a nest which had mysteriously appeared in the pond in the Rosery. Dave Evans responded almost immediately to my request for identification:

This looks like a Moorhen's nest. A bird has been seen over the recent months in and around the Secret Pond.

I guess it has now sent up camp in the Rosery.



Thanks to Dave for his prompt identification. Mystery solved. I don't know whether it was actually used as a nursery in the long run. Maybe next year.

A date for your diary

As the nights start to draw in, why not have an evening of fun by joining in with FoSE's Autumn Quiz? This will take place in the Barn Café on Wednesday 4th October; doors open at 7 for a 7.30 start. The format will be as for the last one - teams of up to six, tickets £5 each, payable on the door, and bring some money for raffle tickets. If you did well in the spring, come and see if you can maintain your position of prowess. If you were pipped to the prizes, come for revenge. If you didn't do so well, come again anyway and see if you can move up the leader board. If you didn't come last time, you missed a good night, so make sure you book a place this time. You can book for a whole team or as an individual or part team and we will ensure that no-one is left out. Book your place by emailing rsvp@fose.org.uk and we will look forward to seeing you in October. Proceeds will go towards the purchase of a new fruit cage in the Kitchen Garden.

With thanks to GACT

When Carolyn announced that she would like help in raising funds for a new fruit cage, she thought it would cost around £2,500. Further research revealed the cost to be much higher, around £4,500. How on earth was FoSE to raise that much? Through the good offices of Roger Ohison, who submitted a bid on FoSE's behalf to the *Gatwick Area Community Trust*, we have recently been awarded £2,500 towards the project, so our heartfelt thanks to GACT. With the £500 raised from the spring quiz, the target is beginning to come in sight. If we can raise another £500 from the autumn quiz, we only have £1,000 to find, and Carolyn will be able to grow soft fruit to share with the café and local community fridges rather than the resident bird population.

Is anyone feeling artistic?

James has found a style of plant label he would like to use around the garden, and he now needs someone to write them.

I was wondering if any of the volunteers have beautiful writing and might be able to write some plant



labels for us on copper labels to go out around the Garden? I have the labels and would supply a pen and names, but I just don't have the time and skills myself. I saw these labels in the garden at Lewes Castle recently and was thinking something like this (these ones are aluminium). If anyone is interested and could help, please do get in touch with me.

So, if you have beautiful handwriting and some time to spare, you could really make your mark on Standen.

Monterey Pine rising from the chippings!

We were all saddened by the demise of the Monterey Pine and hoped that we would be able to create Son (or Daughter) of said pine by some means or other. It looks as if it is Carolyn who had the green fingers in this instance.

We saved lots of the pine cones from the Monterey Pine with the intention of saving seeds to sow. However Mother Nature has done the job for us! I found 14 seedlings in the wood chippings that were spread as a mulch in the Kitchen Garden. They have been potted up and after a brief spell on the mist bench, they are doing well. They have now been moved to the warm greenhouse and will be potted on into air pots soon. All being well some will be planted out into the garden in the future.



A rare visitor

Carolyn's sharp eyes picked up an insect on an unusual perch recently, a Pine Hawk-Moth, *Sphinx pinastri*.

Spotted up on the Top Terrace on the glass sculpture. Apparently, they are rarely seen as they are so well camouflaged. Mainly seen in Southern and Eastern England and Europe, the adults are seen May to July. The Moth feeds on Honeysuckle nectar at night. It has a

wingspan of 6.5 to 8cm. Eggs are laid on Scots Pine and feed on the needles. Caterpillars hatch between June and September, eventually descending to the ground to pupate and overwinter in the leaf litter.

Presumably the Scots Pine is the attraction. Hopefully the eggs won't eat too many needles.

Unknown craftsman, please step forward



Glyn Jones has found another mystery to be solved.

The Events Team found an old toy in a storeroom and set about restoring it to use. The TicTacToe had seen better days but had obviously been lovingly crafted with wooden blocks and steel spindles, but nobody seems to know who made it or when it was made.

Anyone have any clues? The refurbished item now has a support frame to hold it up - it lasted 2 months exposure to kids on Goose Green before being in need of repairs again! The latest model has steel brackets and

supports. Will it see out the Summer in one piece?"

Once again, if you are the person who made this, or know who did, please let us know.

Ben's pride and Joy

Can it really be ten years since Ben Wiles spent all those hours renovating Tully the Tractor. James recently found some photos he took of the process, and sure enough, they were ten years old. He thought FoSE members might like to see them. Here is the 'before' picture.





This looks like something out of *The Repair Shop*. Hope Ben had made a note of where all the pieces went.

Poor Tully looks positively naked...



...and definitely missing some vital equipment.

However, Ben clearly knew what he was about, and at the end of the process, Tully was gleaming, raring to go and ready to return to duty on the Standen estate.



'Horrible job'

Or not, as the case may be. Apologies to Guy but making charcoal must be one of the messier tasks carried out at Standen. Anne Scutt has given an account of the most recent burn carried out by the Woods Group.

At last, after a very long time, (the summer before the covid) the Woods Group have started to make charcoal again. Our first burn was under the tuition of Adam from Nymans (an experienced charcoal maker). We were pleased to have some training as it was a reminder of how to load the kiln and stack the wood in the most efficient way.



For those who don't know about making charcoal you use a Kiln - a round metal container about 4ft high and 4ft in diameter - and load the kiln with dry, seasoned wood. The wood is placed in it from above and loaded to a level about 8" above the rim, The lid is rested on top of the wood and the fire lit from underneath. As the wood burns down the lid comes down and rests on the rim of the kiln, stopping the flow of air. When

the fire has burnt itself out and has gone cold you remove the lid and have a kiln full of lovely charcoal.

Unfortunately, things went rather wrong on the first burn. The second time was much more successful.

Unloading the kiln and placing the charcoal in bags is a messy job. Before covid we had lots of helpers when loading the kiln. However, when it came to unloading the kiln, the men (apart from Tim and Kevin) seemed



to make themselves scarce. It was left to the ladies to do this. So imagine my surprise when I turned up on the Wednesday after the second burn and found some of the men willingly helping to empty the kiln and bag up the charcoal. This second burn was a great success and we produced 25 bags of

charcoal. As long as I have been doing this, this is the most we have ever had. Previously we would be pleased if we produced 18 - 20 bags.

We have a plentiful supply of wood so we can continue to make charcoal now we have started the process again.

And finally...

Don't forget to book your place for the Quiz!