

In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 77 Nov 2024

In this edition of In a Nutshell
TIMES PAST AT STANDEN
WEEDING THE COMPOST
MULCH GLORIOUS MULCH
TREE ON THE MOVE
VOLUNTEER ON THE MOVE
SOMEONE DONE HIM IN!
AND FINALLY...

FoSE calendar

Intriguing old photos

James was recently given copies of a couple of fascinating old photos of his home at Hollybush Cottage. In this one, he was able to identify the sitter:

The person sitting in my front garden with a dog is Annie Chapman who lived in the house at that time [1920s] - married to the Beale's chauffeur.

I looked up Annie and her husband on the 1921 census and found that John Chapman was aged 60 and born in Norfolk - though he couldn't name the parish. Annie was a Londoner, aged 58. Curiously, John gives his address at Standen as *The Garage*, presumably a nod to his occupation. Twenty years earlier, John, Annie and their children had been



living in Holland Park, where John was working as a 'coachman'. Now, I wonder how the Beale's found their chauffeur?



The second photo seems to date from an earlier era. Judging from the tight bodices, cinched in waists, leg of mutton sleeves on the women, the three piece suit, upstanding collar and boater on the man, I would say that the photo probably dates from the 1890s.

The 1891 census has two entries for Holly Bush Cottages. One is for the Ross family, who had six children at home. However, the youngest two were both girls, aged 9 and 6, which doesn't fit the picture. The other cottage was lived in by James Weller and his wife Agnes. In 1891 the household also included Agnes' 19-year-old sister, and two of her brothers, aged 12 and 6, as well as a 2-year-old stepson. In 1901, James and Agnes had stepson aged 12 and their own son aged 9 in the household. Given the fact that boys were dressed in girls' clothing for their first few years, I wonder if this group shows James and Agnes - standing together - sister Mary Ann, and Agnes' two sons, Oliver and James.

Of course, this could all be speculation.... If anyone can enlighten me, either about the date or the people, please do get in touch. With a gardener's eye, the thing that struck James most was the state of the garden and the amount of greenery on the façade:

You can see how overgrown the Beales liked to keep it - I don't think they were entirely happy with Philip Webb's wish to keep it, as it was overgrown / hidden until the 1950s at least!

Composting - Standen style

When I first started volunteering at Standen, a more seasoned volunteer commented somewhat acerbically, 'We don't do dead-heading'. In other words, we weren't in for a little, gentle, twee gardening. So, when James said 'weeding' this is what he meant:



So, the first task confronting the volunteers was to remove the Shoofly plants, which had rather taken over bins 3, 4 and 5. Once the compost underneath had been liberated, it needed to be covered to keep the rain off. Until a new roof can be fitted, it is an ongoing struggle to stop things getting waterlogged.



This involved a lot of scrambling around under Lauren's direction, and it does rather look as if she is about to use one of the posts as an offensive weapon.



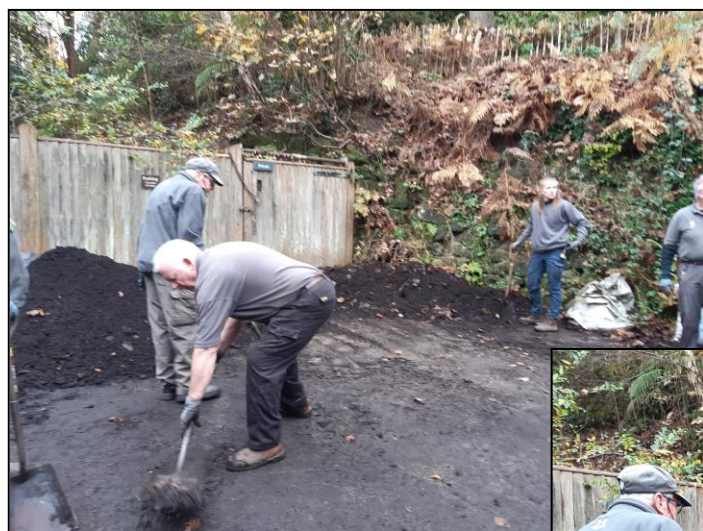


Eventually, it was all tucked in to everyone's satisfaction - though I'm not quite sure how Action Man got in on the act.

Bay five is now definitely under control.
Not sure about Action Man.



Mulching - Standen style



Mulch is wonderful stuff - once it's where it's needed. Some of this pile was earmarked for the Farm Track - which does look much better for its warm, cosy blanket.

However, there was a lot of effort, both mechanical and human, involved in getting it where it was needed. Something of a



baptism of fire for Julia, the newest member of the garden staff, who wielded her shovel with gusto.

It was definitely a team effort, with James, Lauren and Julia all part of the operation.

Travelling Cedar



The Trust is installing a leachate tank down in the nursery area to prevent water high in minerals which has run off the compost area from getting into the natural water systems on the estate. Part of the space where it is due to go was taken up by a weeping cedar tree which has been minding its own business in the little bed below the compost hard-standing for some time. A number of volunteers helped to dig it up and transfer it to a new home, no mean feat considering its size and shape.



Once it was out of the ground, it was a case of waiting for the trailer, and then navigating very carefully through the kitchen garden.



The team took their job of guiding it along the croquet lawn path very seriously.



Finally, after a great deal of heavy digging, the tree was settled into its new home in the Rosery, well restrained by ropes and stakes to prevent it from falling over before its roots have had time to establish.

Tractor rides, anyone?



After a morning's hard slog lighting and tending an enormous bonfire, volunteer Bob needed a lift.

MURDER MOST FOUL!



It's a veritable who-dun-it. Someone has murdered lovely Stan, guardian angel of the kitchen garden. I suspect that rotten Bert, but he seems now to have skipped the country, and so escaped justice. Shame on him.

And finally...

To show the esteem in which she is held,
someone gave Lauren a flower! Not sure she
was all that impressed!

