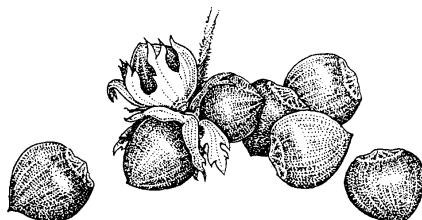


In a Nutshell

THE NEWSLETTER FROM THE FRIENDS OF STANDEN ESTATE:

NUTS ABOUT STANDEN!



No 79 March 2025

In this edition of In a Nutshell

FoSE calendar

MIGHTY YEW TREE
20,000 SNOWDROPS
GATE-WORKS
WORK IN PROGRESS
AND FINALLY...

Caring for the Yew

The venerable yew tree, planted by the Beales at the corner by the Lavender Lawn has received some TLC in recent weeks. The bed in front of it has had a complete makeover, with an intrusive holly removed and replaced with better shrub specimens imported from the tea-room garden. These don't obscure the view of the tree, which now resumes its rightful focal point position as visitors walk round Goose Green. Below, James outlines the history of the tree and explains why it is so important.



The Yew Tree in the corner of the Lavender or Mulberry Lawn is one of the oldest trees at Standen, somewhere in the region of 350



years old. It is also one of only three trees on the site when the House was built, in fact Philip Webb shortened the design length of the Kitchen Wing so that this tree could be retained. The other two trees were the beech on the Top Terrace and the mulberry which stood in the Little

Orchard / House Courtyard, which came down in the 1987 storm. The 1987 storm also badly damaged the yew, with it losing around two thirds of its crown - the picture with the dancing on the Green is taken from August 1987 and shows the size of the tree three months before the storm. It has still not retained this size.



The other very special thing about this tree is that it is in fact two trees - one male and one female, joined at the base. When you look at the photographs, you can see one side is covered in yellow pollen - the male side - and the other is green, and this is the side that has yew berries in the autumn. You can also see a difference in the texture of the trunks.

As this is such an important tree, we need to do all we can to ensure it survives into the future and to this end, we are, with the help of the Woods volunteers, going to be constructing a platform around the base to relieve compaction on the soil and delicate feeding roots. This will be made from timber

milled elsewhere at Standen and will enable us to make more of this lovely corner and very special plant(s!) We will make a new seat to go under the tree and have some interpretation as well to tell everyone about the history and what we are doing.

Winter glory

Ten years ago, FoSE made a commitment to purchase 2,000 snowdrops in the green, every year for 10 years. In other words, we planned to plant 20,000 snowdrops around the gardens at Standen. To that end, batches of bulbs have been planted along the stable yard



wall on the drive, in the Hydrangea Walk, beside the Sleeper Steps and along the path above the Top Terrace. Not every bulb has thrived - snowdrops can be a bit picky as well as sometimes being vulnerable to mice and squirrels. However, in many areas around the gardens the FoSE snowdrops

make a welcome appearance when everything is at its greyest at the end of winter. This year's batch were planted in the rain, but seemed to be none the worse for being well watered in.



Something of a marathon

The main gate at Standen had been broken and in need of replacement for some time. In order to conserve funds, James decided that he would organise the demolishing of the remains of the old ones, rather than get contractors in. However, it turned out that even though the gates were broken, the gate posts were well and truly concreted in, and to some depth below the driveway. Along with some intrepid volunteers, James spent the whole of one cold and miserable winter afternoon drilling and jemmying to remove the old posts.



The new gates are now installed, and very smart they look, too.

Membership reminder

Membership forms are coming in slowly this year. Thanks to those who have renewed, but if you are thinking of doing so but have not yet done, please do so as soon as is convenient. Forms are attached to this newsletter and contain details on how to pay.



Shed-works

For some time, Standen has been in need of a new shed; the old one fell into disrepair a while back and no longer had a floor. FoSE agreed to buy a new one, and volunteers are now in the process of erecting it. It is proving something of a challenge, as the instructions are extremely vague, but it's getting there.



The expression on Tim's face seems to say: 'And here's one I prepared earlier'.

FoSE AGM

This year's FoSE AGM is coming up soon in May. Date to be confirmed.