

## Trees for body, mind & soul

by Dr Peter Rowan, Tree Warden for Tivetshall St Margaret

Saturday 2 October 2004 was the East Anglian Regional Tree Warden Forum, held at The Venue, Centre Parcs, Elvedon in Suffolk. There were over 120 delegates of which 29 of us were from South Norfolk. The others were from as far afield as Tendring (Essex) and the wonderfully named Hollywell-cum-Needingworth from Huntingdonshire in the County of Cambridgeshire! We were lucky to also have with us two representatives of The Tree Council, Chairman Sue Roe and Kevin Hand, as well as Mary Clarke from the Homeopathy Trust and Stephen Gordon of the Council of Organizations Representing Homeopaths.

The theme of the day was 'Trees Matter for Body, Mind and Soul'. The first speaker of the day after a welcome from Robin Taylor (SNDC) was Sue Roe and she emphasized the importance that trees have, not just to the landscape but also to wild life and people.

Next on stage was Richard Mabey. We were lucky to have this author

and broadcaster's talk on 'Trees: Free Spirits or Children in Care?' There were lots of things I learnt from him, including the fact that the UK virtually invented deforestation 2,000 years ago when 90% of our native trees had gone. So the Yew tree that's survived 6,000 years in this country has done very well!

I was also surprised to hear that carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) 'improves anxiety and depression'. After he spoke I was able to ask Richard about CO<sup>2</sup> and mental state and his theory seems to be based on the fact that hyperventilation (rapid breathing), which literally blows CO<sup>2</sup> out of the lungs and changes the blood in a chemical way, can be treated by breathing 'old' expired air out of a brown paper bag. (Ask a doctor before you try this one at home but it does work for panic attacks.)

Kevin Hand was next and spoke of many things but it was great to hear that 2004 was going to be the best seed year for 10 years. That was *cont'd page 2*

Tree Wardens walk on the wild side, Centre Parcs, 2 October 2004



Picture courtesy of Dr Peter Rowan, Tree Warden for Tivetshall St Margaret.

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visible just walking around our setting later. He certainly inspired me to collect seeds the next weekend on Seed Gathering Sunday and to plant them in pots. Also the importance of getting the right ones into the ground in the right place. The acorns of an Oak and the berries of the Hawthorn will grow in very different places! It was a good time, too, to teach children about collecting and thinking about trees, which might just grow up with them. There need to be Tree Wardens of the future! So think trees!

I was also greatly interested in the development of our hedges. There is still a lot of work to do on these - certainly in the Tivetshalls where others, including the farmers, have done a lot. Trees can become part of this aspect of our landscape if positioned carefully and thoughtfully. I shall certainly tell our parish council if I, or others, plant trees, because this seems to be the best way of getting the information into the minutes for records in the future.

Stephen Gordon talked to us next about the healing aspects of trees; as a practicing homeopath of some 22 years he told us of different traditions in countries as wide apart as India and China. 'Hugging' trees was also debated. Herbs came into the talk as well and as doctors first treated heart failure with digitalis (foxglove), I felt it was important not to dismiss anything just because at this stage we do not understand it. It was back in 1775 that Dr William Willberforce noticed on his way by horse and cart to Birmingham that a woman was ill with what was called 'the dropsy'. As a practicing

physician he told them that there was nothing conventional medicine of the time could do. On the way back he was a good enough doctor to ask how her heart failure was and was amazed to find she was better thanks to foxglove leaves! He put this in writing in medical journals but the sad thing was that the active drug (digitalis) fell into disrepute as the wrong dose managed to kill a few people.

The importance of the pharmacology and getting 'treatments' right was well documented by cases where very useful plants such as Hemlock and Belladonna killed people. In 399 BC Socrates was sentenced to death by poison and died after drinking a cup of Hemlock. As Napoleon said 'I do not want two diseases – one nature-made and one doctor-made'. That was in 1820. In 1959 another knowledgeable person said 'patients may recover in spite of drugs or because of them'.

Mary Clarke spoke to us next on The Homeopathy Wood being developed in Northamptonshire and then George Britten's 'The Falklands Walk' was simple and for me a very valuable talk on his experiences 'on the shop floor' in Cambridgeshire. It's no good planting trees where they will get used as bike stands or goal posts or are liable to misuse by vandals.

Before lunch Carol Carpenter talked for a few minutes on the important spiritual matter of organizing a tree service in a church in her parish of Langley with Hardley in Norfolk.

Lunch. This tree warden had particular interest in lunch (it was good, thank you hosts) and the

weather. I'd taken some photos on arrival with blue skies and wonderful autumn colours on leaves with no wind. By the end of lunch it was cloudy and with everyone's help I managed to get a few photos of all of us present. I've often found portraits hard work but this was fun if not so easy. Anyway after the photo shoot the sun suddenly came out just when I'd put my cameras away and I actually could see how wonderful the venue was with the tall pine trees and the lake behind. We split into three small groups and Elvedon 'rangers' took us for a walk on the wild side. I didn't get my group's ranger's name but I did hope there was a chance it was Lou Read! We saw the season of 'mist and mellow fruitfulness' in the great setting of Elvedon Forest, where Center Parks is located. Information came in fast on various features like the lakes, fruit, and the diverse wild life which the trees find so important for the quality of their lives. One valley was even designed with water and bird tables. As I looked at it a Stone Curlew flew overhead, over all the robins (including our Robin) and other more common birds.

We finished the walks about the time the football finished at Carrow Road and it started to rain. We had even missed the bad weather. Robin thanked everyone who had helped organize and take part in the Forum, we responded with a final thanks from all present to Robin. Then the rain stopped and the evening sun came out.

# TPO News

Since the last issue, new TPOs have been served to protect trees in Brooke, Wacton, Framingham Earl, Wymondham, Long Stratton and Loddon.

In the Brooke Conservation Area, a significant Oak tree (pictured) is implicated in a subsidence claim at a property on High Green. A TPO was served to allow further information to be sought, and the TPO is due to be considered at a meeting of the Planning Sites Subcommittee on 9 February.

A Conservation Area notification to fell a tree was also the reason for serving the Wacton Order. The Ash tree is a lesser tree when compared to the Oak at Brooke, however it is a significant feature of the local scene and as such, considered worthy of retention.

Planning applications prompted the Orders at Spooner Row in Wymondham and at Long Stratton. In Spooner Row, the TPO has helped achieve a more appropriate layout for a new dwelling. In Long Stratton, the proposed removal of trees to facilitate a new road junction to serve a new housing development was considered to be detrimental to the local landscape and therefore was one of the reasons given for refusing planning permission. The TPO is therefore to protect the trees in light of this decision.

The Framingham Earl and Loddon Orders are in accordance with the Local Plan Policy that seeks to protect significant trees within development boundaries. In Framingham Earl, the new TPO includes an Area of trees including Pines, whilst a single Oak is the subject of the Loddon Order (pictured).

## TreeLine QUIZ

Or 20 questions – the answers to which are all associated with trees

1. Can you fly from there to Norwich?
2. Lady of the woods
3. English Bean tree
4. Witches broom
5. Victor at Agincourt
6. Mourning for his master
7. A chequered past
8. A clip round the ear
9. What a good boy am I
10. Don't scrape the pattern off
11. Jack Tar drank this
12. Heeled over round the cape
13. Not a tardy worm
14. It used to happen at 21
15. Hairy bear under dunce's cap
16. Seasonal barb
17. Enlightenment in the fall
18. Too flimsy to rig a sail on
19. Life's a . . . .
20. Poorly yet again

Compiled by *Rufus*.

Answers on page 7



*Below: High Green Oak, subject of Brooke TPO*



# TreeWeek Planting 2004

Tree Week 2004 was the fifth time that South Norfolk Tree Wardens have taken part in National Tree Week and the demand for plants demonstrated that the enthusiasm and commitment of our Tree Wardens is as strong as ever. Tree Wardens from twenty-seven parishes planted a total of 460 trees and one mile of hedging between them. Since 2000, this brings the total number of trees planted in the District to almost 3,000 and 4.5 miles of hedging – 30,000 plants in all over 61 parishes. Last year's failed Holly planting was turned into 500 metres of native hedging and 50 Oak trees.

As our traditional collection point was demolished during 2004, we relocated to the main car park – a bleak prospect in late November. We also changed our plant and shelter suppliers. Misgivings about these new arrangements were quickly dispelled and I am happy to report that the event worked better than ever. We were sheltered from wind and rain by a smart blue awning, lent by the Leisure Team. The orders of plants and shelters arrived on time and correct. Tree Warden Sandy Munro (Bawburgh) gave us his invaluable time for the fourth consecutive year. Carol Carpenter (Langley) and Eric Wilkinson (Chedgrave) joined Sandy for a second time and together they took control and quickly had everything running very smoothly. A huge thank-you

to these three, we really would be stuck without their help.

Our colleague Steve Beckett, who is also the Tree Warden for Tasburgh, took over while we had some lunch; we were all very grateful for that! In addition to shelter, the Leisure Team provided us with a truck and driver for the day, Mark Smerdon, who kindly made some deliveries during the afternoon, to Tree Wardens unable to collect.

The new suppliers were punctual, the orders correct and it made a big difference to us that the plants had previously been labelled and sorted into parishes by the nursery. As far as we know, the quality was at least as good as in previous years. We have received comments about the slender bamboo canes, these were chosen for reasons of cost. Any other comments would be welcome.

Thank you to everyone who took part in making National Tree Week in South Norfolk such a success. As always, we would be very pleased to receive reports, photographs and updates on your Tree Week planting schemes. TG

*NOTE* On Tree Collection Day, most of the Tree Wardens had collected their orders by 1pm. It became apparent that waiting at the collection point during the afternoon was not a very good use of resources. Consequently, we have decided that in the future collection will be during the morning only, with other arrangements made for anyone who finds this collection time impossible.

*Below:* Sandy Munro and Eric Wilkinson, volunteers on Tree Collection Day at South Norfolk House, 26 November 2004.



## RUBY CELEBRATIONS

There were fortieth wedding anniversary celebrations in Framingham Earl last Autumn. This noteworthy achievement led us to think what tree I would have given as a present had Mr & Mrs F not already got a wood-full of their own! Top of the list would probably be *Quercus rubra*, the Red Oak. This tree is similar to the English Oak, but is faster growing when young. It is very adaptable and thrives in most situations; a recipe for a good marriage perhaps?!

Below: Carol Carpenter, volunteer on on Tree Collection Day at South Norfolk House, 26 November 2004.



## SERVICE OF PRAISE FOR TREES

Our second Tree Service was held in Loddon Church on Sunday October 17th. About 72 people attended and many took part in the proceedings.

Both Sue Roe from the Tree Council and Robin Taylor from South Norfolk Council read poems and Carol Carpenter (Langley) and Eric Wilkinson (Chedgrave) read the lessons. The Brownies performed and sang. Many children from Loddon First School had made models of trees to decorate the font.

Several ladies had spent the previous day decorating the church with autumnal greenery and pots, which were blessed at the service and later taken to the new tree nursery at Langley School.

A retiring collection went towards the Church Bells Appeal. The bell ringers had turned up especially for us to ring the bells, prior to the service. Tea was enjoyed after the service and a table was set with many different tree seeds and berries, giving everyone a chance to identify them.

It is hoped that Jilly Baines, Tree Warden for Wicklewood, will arrange our third service next autumn. She is already having ideas for the day and hoping everyone will attend.

Carol Carpenter, Tree Warden for Langley & Hardley

## NOMINATE A FRIEND TO WIN A COPY OF *The Heritage Trees of Britain & Northern Ireland* !

There are now 93 Tree Wardens in South Norfolk District covering 92 of the 119 parishes and 76% of the land area of the District.

This year we would very much like your help to fill the vacancies Do you have a friend living in one of the following parishes?

Aslacton, Bixley, Bressingham, Carleton Rode, Carleton St Peter, Claxton, Colney, Framingham Pigot, Geldeston, Great Melton, Great Moulton, Hedenham, Hellington, Holverston, Kirby Bedon, Kirby Cane, Kirstead, Little Melton, Loddon, Mulbarton, Mundham, Raveningham, Runhall, Shelfanger, Swardeston, Tibenham

If you can persuade someone to become a Warden in one of these parishes (and they agree!), we will put your name into a draw for a copy of the best-selling book, *The Heritage Trees of Britain & Northern Ireland*, signed by one of its authors, Jon Stokes. The draw will take place at the Quiz Night on 6 April (an ideal opportunity for new Wardens to meet the hardy perennials!), so get persuading now!

To nominate a friend (or friends), use the special form enclosed, and we'll do the rest! RT

# The Oak

A familiar shape in our countryside, a curer of illness and a filler of bellies, and the stuff of beer barrels. So it is no wonder that this tree has become synonymous with being British.

There are many sayings associated with the tree, and I expect you have your favourite, but the one I remember – having joined the Royal Navy at the tender age of 15 and been taught by those who had been tutored by Victorians, who in turn had been schooled by men who fought in wooden battleships – is “when ships were made of oak and men were made of iron” a reference to the men-of-war and their crews led by Nelson and his ilk, whom we were constantly urged to emulate, mostly in vain.

The oak is extremely strong, hard and durable and these qualities gave it high status from early in our history. Druids planted oaks in countless thousands and when the acorns matured into trees, these became sacred groves for the enactment of rites. Later oaks were frequently used as boundary markers and places to meet or hold open air worship, these trees were known as gospel oaks. On the road from Wymondham to Norwich will be found Kett's Oak where Robert Kett mustered his men before marching on the city. In the Norman Hall in Winchester hangs on a wall King Arthur's Round Table, reputedly made from a slice through an ancient oak. When I was a police officer I used to stand beneath this table and give my evidence, in what was then the Assize Court. Probably the best known oak, nationally, is the oak in which Charles II hid following his defeat in 1651 at the battle of Worcester.

Not only are numerous pubs named after the event but warships were also named the Royal Oak. In some parts of the country, May 29th is celebrated still, as 'Royal Oak Day' and sprigs of oak worn to mark the saving of the king.

Perhaps the fascination for the Druids was in the size and oddness of the seed of the tree, the familiar acorn. A green spherical egg held in a special cup must have had spiritual meaning for them. In oak forests this abundance of seed was a boon for local people providing a valuable food source for their herds of feral pigs, coming late in the year. In some forests around the country, people with 'forester's rights' still value their entitlement to pannage. Those of you slightly more advanced in years than me, may remember drinking coffee made from acorns when supplies of the real stuff was scarce during WWII. Roasted and sliced they were also used as a substitute for almonds and oak bark was found to be a cure for diarrhoea ... just a thought, but who first

Kett's Oak,  
Wymondham

found that out..and how? But acorns boiled and ground down into a paste can be made into an edible bread, and there are not many towns that do not have a Tanners Lane, where leather was cured using the tannic acid found in the bark of the oak, (which is the active ingredient to cure the aforementioned upset tummy).

We have all, no doubt, noticed the small strange growths on oak branches, often called oak apples. These are caused by gall wasps and have been found to have some odd but useful applications, well, if you are a spy or a terrorist without any money, that is. Galls ground down into a powder and mixed with rainwater and rusty iron make a good ink – but galls used alone make an invisible ink. The galls also contain gallic acid which is a principle ingredient in making explosive fireworks. I wonder if Guy Fawkes knew that?

Paul Gowman, Tree Warden for Swainsthorpe



# In Memorium

It with sadness that I report the deaths of Arthur Hall and Bridget Sargent.

Arthur was the Tree Warden for Swardeston for many years, only stepping down in June in light of his failing health. He was a kind, considerate and traditional gentleman who quietly involved himself with environmental issues. In 1980 he was very much involved with the planting of trees on Swardeston Common to commemorate the Queen Mother's eightieth birthday. More recently, his intervention resulted in some existing mature trees being safeguarded from development by a TPO. All these trees, new and old, will continue to thrive as a legacy to the village.

Many will remember Bridget fondly from the visits we made to her family's estate in Morningthorpe Parish. Together with her husband Hugh (a former Chairman of South Norfolk Council), she cared for areas of new woodland created in the aftermath of the 1987 storm. Bridget was also passionate about safeguarding older trees and it was her favourite veteran tree that provided the inspiration for South Norfolk's "Chairmen's Trees" scheme. RT

## QUIZ ANSWERS

Answers 1 London plane 2. Birch  
3. Rowan (Atkinson) 4. Birch 5. Yew (bow)  
6. Pine 7. Wild service tree (from whence  
pubs named The Chequers derive name) 8.  
Box 9. Plum  
10. Willow 11. Lime 12. Hornbeam 13.  
Sloe 14. Keys 15. Fir cone.  
16. Holly 17. Apple 18. Beech mast 19.  
Beech 20. Sycamore

# SPOTLIGHT ON HERITAGE TREES

In 2002, the Tree Council 'gave' 50 *Great British Trees* to the Queen, to mark her Golden Jubilee. This was reported in TreeLine issue number 10, July 2002. South Norfolk was distinguished by having two trees included: Kett's Oak at Hethersett and the Chedgrave Jubilee Oak.

Now this idea has been taken a stage further by authors Jon Stokes and Donald Rodger, who published *The Heritage Trees of Britain and Northern Ireland*. In October 2004. The idea behind *Heritage Trees* is to create 'green monuments' based on the premise that special trees should be given at least the same recognition and protection as listed buildings. Many of the original Jubilee trees make a re-appearance,

including Kett's Oak. The other South Norfolk tree in the book is the Hethel Old Thorn, reputed to be at least 700 years old. This makes it the oldest Hawthorn in East Anglia and probably one of the oldest in the country.

The book has excellent photographs and fascinating stories of more than eighty selected trees, all with public access, throughout Britain and Northern Ireland. Currently only available in hardback, it is well worth looking at and you will see that Robin is offering a copy signed by Jon Stokes as a prize for Tree Warden recruitment! TG



Hethel Old Thorn

## TREES FREE TO GOOD HOMES

Ken Grayling, Tree Warden for Tharston, has plenty of Ash trees, varying from 300 to 1000mm tall, all pot-grown from self-set outdoors. Please contact him direct on 01508 531754

Mrs Ann Thwaite of Tharston has some trees including Hawthorns, that she is willing to give to Tree Wardens. She can be contacted direct on 01508 489569

Mr Newman of Eaton, Norwich is seeking a site for a 4 year-old pot-grown Oak. He would like his grandson to be able to see the tree mature so the site needs to be somewhere public. If you can help, contact Mr Newman on 01603 45525.

## HELLOS

### & Goodbyes

We are sorry to say goodbye to Michael Maguire (Stockton), Colin Marriott (Earsham) and Mark Dickie (Brooke). I am pleased to say that replacements for them have already been found with Carl Crame, Robert Rawlinson and Roma Beardsell becoming Tree Wardens in the respective parishes.

Cathy Terry has become an additional Warden for Surlingham, and Mrs Darrell has become a second Warden for Tacolneston. In the last edition of *Treeline* I incorrectly reported that Linda Taylor had become Tree Warden for Toft Monks. Michael Matthews is infact the new "post-holder", and we are pleased to have a Warden in this previously-uncovered part of the District.

Ashwellthorpe has joined the scheme again after a gap of a few years; Patrick Hollingsworth is now Tree Warden for this parish which includes Fundenhall. Also re-joining us is Wymondham Parish, here Ann Robert is the volunteer for the post. In Morningthorpe, David Sargent is continuing in the role undertaken by his late mother. Finally, Shane Sheedy, who was already a Tree Warden for Tivetshall St Mary, has relocated to Stoke Holy Cross and has very neatly taken the vacancy created there earlier this year. RT

## Forthcoming events

Wednesday 6 April	Thorny Questions? A Quiz Night for Tree Wardens 7.30pm at South Norfolk House A light-hearted quiz for you to see how much you know about tree issues!
May 2005	Walk in the Woods At present we do not plan to organise this event, but leave you to organise your own walks, perhaps with other Tree Wardens? Let us know if you need any help from us.
Saturday 9 July	Summer Day School. Details of location and times to follow. Once again we plan to join forces with Breckland Tree Wardens.
end of September /early October	Eastern Regional Tree Warden Forum This is being hosted in 2005 by Essex. We will let you have further details.
23 November to 4 December	National Tree Week 2005
25 November.	Tree Collection day from South Norfolk House. Details will be sent out during the summer.

## Access to South Norfolk Tree Wardens

### Tree Wardens and the Internet/ World-Wide Web

E-mail addresses are given for those Tree Wardens and organizers already on the web. If in doubt visit Ian's woodland web site:  
<http://www.ibdigital.co.uk/woodland>

... and let us know when you get online!

...see all issues in colour @  
<http://www.ibdigital.co.uk/woodland>

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It's all about sharing information and best practise so please contribute any item of interest, local or national activity. Your news and views will be most welcome.

*Any ideas –put them in the (e)mail.*

