

# Gunton Woodland Community Project

## NEWSLETTER

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March / April 2008



### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

There was an excellent turnout of 71 members and friends for our AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> March. In his annual report Barry spoke of another very successful year of improvements in the wood, the completion of more than 20,000 work party hours, several enjoyable outings and other social events, and increasing membership numbers. The financial position showed a surplus for the year of £380 bringing the year end balance to £5928, a figure which included a £1000 grant which has since been spent on the purchase of audio/visual equipment. In fact, the new digital projector was used in David's presentation of a film by John Moore *10 Years in Gunton Wood*. This was very well received, albeit with a feeling of nostalgia for the old days when we all looked a lot younger!

The current Committee and the Hon Auditor were re-elected and plans were presented for the coming year's work programme and social events. These included our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations at the end of March and a Gunton Fun Day fete (in conjunction with the school) in July, details to follow.

The only disappointment was the absence of a representative from Suffolk Wildlife Trust which inhibited any useful discussion on the problems associated with the new Nature Reserve and Foxburrow Wood. At present some of the issues are ....

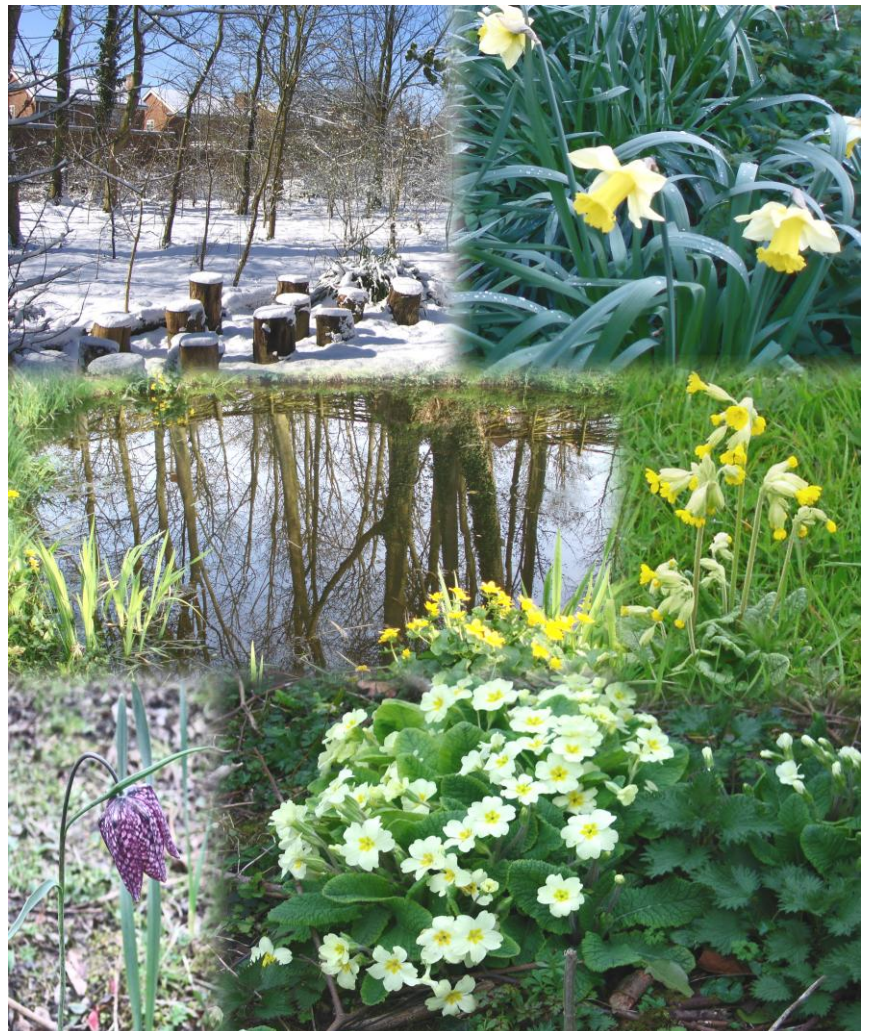
- The **Nature Reserve** on Leisure Way has been fenced, but so far with only two, instead of three, kissing gate entrances. The perimeter path is now open to the public. GWCP had offered to help SWT to clear brush and brambles but SWT wanted to complete more ecological surveys before allowing us on site. The Committee and individual members have written to SWT expressing concern over the slow progress in making the Reserve an attractive area for both the public and wildlife, and we are pressing for a detailed development plan to be prepared. We are hoping to meet SWT personnel on site in June to discuss the issues in more detail.

- **Foxburrow Wood** is another problem. Just before Christmas, SWT advised Waveney District Council that they were withdrawing from their previous role as Managers of Foxburrow Wood. Hitherto, GWCP had been undertaking various jobs in the wood, such as fencing, gates, bridge repairs and bramble clearance, in accordance with a management plan drawn up by SWT. Due to SWT's withdrawal, GWCP cannot continue this work without formal approval from the landowners. SWT is trying to negotiate with the individuals involved but, so far, without success. Future GWCP work in Foxburrow will therefore have to be limited to that part which is owned by WDC until the position is resolved. This is disappointing as the fencing along the A12 perimeter needs urgent attention.

### Gunton Wood

Back home, in our patch, Gunton Wood is looking fabulous and visitor numbers are sky-high as Spring has finally arrived. The picture collage shows, clockwise; snow at Easter, daffodils, cowslips, primroses (easily our best show ever), a snakeshead fritillary and our pond edged with marsh marigolds.

On the wild flower meadow, common spotted orchids show great promise, although sadly, the early purples seem to be dwindling. But the bluebells in Church Wood suggest there's another great display to come.



## The Social Whirl

Paris

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2008

As usual, David has done a great job organising this trip and we have a full coach with driver Neil Ripley, the same as last year. Don't forget your passport, EHIC health form, menu choice for Friday's dinner, camera, sun-tan cream and Euros. Coach pick up time is 5.00 am sharp at Gunton St Peters Church. Happy holidays!

**Wells and Walsingham Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008**

Plans for this trip are well advanced. Ray has successfully twisted the arm of the owner of the Light Railway so that we can pretty well monopolise the train to make the transfer to Walsingham after lunch. Full details are given in the attached flyer and demand for seats is likely to be strong so don't delay.

**Snape Christmas Spectacular Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2008**

Once again our *entertainment secretary extraordinaire* has worked his magic by reserving 57 of the best seats for this matinee performance. All have been taken by work party members, but David will keep a waiting list.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First GWCP Work Party

Two separate celebrations were held at the end of March to mark this occasion. On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> the current work party downed tools early and adjourned to David and Rosemary's for champagne and Val's chocolate cake, complete with 10 candles, before assembling for the obligatory photocall in the wood.

Two days later more than 80 past and present volunteers and families gathered for BBQ'd hot dogs (donated by Tesco) plus all the trimmings, and two more of Val's iced cakes, to rekindle old memories. The rain held off and a loaned marquee provided welcome protection against the wind. So here's to the next 10 years .....



## Gunton Fun Day

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008

1.00pm to 4.00pm

Our last full-blown fete was in 2005. This year we are combining with Gunton Primary PSFA (Parents, Staff and Friends Association) for what promises to be the biggest and best party that Gunton has ever seen! There will be displays, games, stalls, raffles and competitions so book the date in your diary and bring the family. If you are able to assist on the day please give your name to David or Rosemary. We need your help.

We would also like to have ..... preserves, wrapped cakes, plants / fruit / veg; also nearly new items (but no rubbish please), books, raffle prizes, and of course items for the "bottle draw" stall (these can also be non-alcoholic for youngsters to win). Delivery instructions will be given later. Gazebos may be needed too

There's a lot of hard work involved, but with your help it should be a day to remember

## Our New Seat



Recently, the seat known as *Frank and Lily's* (in memory of their courting days more than 60 years ago), began to disintegrate due to old age. So two of our new work party volunteers, Dick and Colin, took it upon themselves to build a replacement. A fallen holly tree provided the main structure and a couple of weeks later this wonderful seat, built like a battleship, appeared in the wood. Providing it is not vandalised this will surely still be there for another 60 years! *Well done, you two.*

## Cuttings

- **Dawn Chorus** For a variety of reasons we have found it impossible to organise this event this year. We would like to apologise to all those who may be disappointed. Next year we will try again.
- **Wild Flower Plugs** Our wildflower meadow and pond surroundings were the scenes of much activity in February when we planted more than 350 wildflower plugs covering 23 different species. These were obtained from the Plant Nursery at Burlingham Gardens; all are Native stock appropriate to this area..
- **Projector Screen** To enhance the quality of our presentations to local groups of *The GWCP Story* we have purchased a new screen using funds donated by one of our members, to whom we are most grateful.
- **Sea Front Air Festival** More than 30 members have offered to man a *Green Gate* on Royal Plain on a rota basis to collect cash donations from the public. This is a great show of support and much appreciated.

## Nature Notes

### Ancient Woodlands



Anemone  
nemorosa

The generally accepted definition of an *Ancient Woodland* is one that has been under natural tree cover since 1600. New woodland planting was uncommon before that date so any woodland that was in existence then probably dates back many hundreds if not thousands of years earlier.

Identifying an Ancient Woodland is not straightforward since there are 155 species (ie one-tenth of British native flora) which are regarded by some as ancient-woodland indicator plants. The top three (on most lists) are *Woodruff*, *Wood Anemone* and the *Wild Service Tree*. Swathes of wood anemones in flower now in Foxburrow Wood are proof enough that at least part of this wood is, indeed, Ancient Woodland.