



Custos Sylvarum

Newsletter of the Surrey Tree Wardens Network

Welcome to this edition of the Surrey Tree Warden Network newsletter. The aim is to keep groups and individuals in touch with each other, to exchange information, to publicise events and to encourage all manner of tree related activities in Surrey.

THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

The Queen will be celebrating her Diamond Jubilee next year. What better reason to plant some trees! The idea is to persuade as many Parishes and Boroughs in Surrey as possible to plant something next autumn or winter. It could be a single oak, or it could be an orchard of fruit trees. But the first step is to establish how interested you all are in taking part in this, so that we can apply for funds to purchase the trees. Some Surrey Tree Wardens have already expressed an interest: we sent round an email a month or so ago, and had replies from about 20 tree wardens. But there may be more out there who would like to join this commemoration: it would be great if we could get 60 parishes to plant 60 trees. So if you would like to take part please could you contact Peter Fischer: peterfischer@pj464.co.uk, or Liz Ramsay: lizramsay@aol.com. Or phone Liz on 07949 217783. Once we have the funds in place, the next step will be deciding what trees, how many and where.

A Royal Tree Hunt

And here's another diamond of an idea to celebrate the Jubilee. Our Secretary, Chris Pead, had a jumble sale find of tree lover's life when he spotted a 1939 publication "The Royal Record of Tree

CORONATION PLANTING COMMITTEE
PATRON
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

THE ROYAL RECORD
OF TREE PLANTING
THE PROVISION OF OPEN SPACES
RECREATION GROUNDS & OTHER SCHEMES

UNDERTAKEN IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND
ELSEWHERE, ESPECIALLY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
IN HONOUR OF THE CORONATION OF

HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI



CAMBRIDGE

PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
MCMXXXIX

Events And Diary Dates

November 26th to 4th December: National Tree Week

December 11th; January 15th: Help the "Revive the Wye" project with Willow coppicing at The Ranges, by the Thames towpath at Shepperton.

January 29th: Making willow work: come and use the willow to make a garden obelisk. See page 3 for full details.

Spring 2012:

March 17th: Tree Warden Training Day with Jon Stokes and Adam Owen

There are thirteen pages devoted to the trees planted in Surrey for the Coronation, listed parish by parish from Addlestone and Albury, to Wotton and Wrecclesham – some 70 entries in all. The type of tree planted is listed along with the name of the person planting it. It lists not just public plantings but private ones too, as the entry for Carshalton shows (extract on right).

So how have these trees fared? Wouldn't it be good to see what has happened to them over seventy years? Is the splendid avenue in Carshalton still there? Can George's Coronation trees be linked to Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee tree planting events next year? Are there other Royal trees in the County? The Parish of Nutfield has a fine oak planted for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. There must be more.

The first step is to find out if your parish or borough has a Coronation Tree listing. Contact secretary@surreytreewardens.org.uk and Chris will send you "The Record" as a pdf. Or phone him on 01424-730163

Carshalton. In Carshalton Park:

An avenue of 10 English oak (*Quercus pedunculata*); planted by Mrs J. Goodman and S. Saw Esq.; presented by the Urban District Council.

In the garden of Holme Hale, 67, Brookfield Avenue: laburnum; planted by the owner, A. Burton Esq.

SURREY TREE WARDEN NETWORK: 2011 AGM REPORT

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday 28 June at South Nutfield Village Hall and was attended by some 27 people.

Jon Stokes, of the Tree Council, began proceedings with a talk about how he thought the role of trees in this country would develop over the next 20 years. We had to consider that the British landscape was principally man-made and that trees had been used by man for thousands of years. Until World War I, trees were generally managed by coppicing and pollarding, which resulted in their longevity. We need to return to these practices and use trees as a renewable resource, and value hedgerows for foraging.

Next, Adam Owen, of Guildford Council, described how Chantry Wood in Guildford was being renovated and re-enlivened for the benefit of local people and wild life.

For the formal AGM, and in the absence of a Chairman of the Surrey Tree Warden Network, the Treasurer, Don Henderson, was elected to act as chairman.

Don read the report of the previous Chairman, Adam Owen, for 2010. Adam hoped that the new "localism" agenda would encourage the involvement of more people in tree-wardening. The report also referred to the last 2010 event, our very successful expedition to Chilworth Gunpow-

der Mills. As it also coincided with 20 years of Tree Wardens in Surrey, cake and champagne were also enjoyed, despite sub zero temperatures. The meeting passed a vote of thanks to Adam for all his hard work as Chairman.

Don then presented the Treasurer's report. The network had some £1,600 in hand, but this was fast disappearing in running costs, not least in maintaining the website and general administration. For example, the constitution required written notice of the AGM to all members. The cost of copying, postage, envelopes was in excess of £100. It was therefore vital to undertake fundraising.

After lunch, we visited the new woodland burial ground, run by Nutfield Parish Council. A beautiful place to be buried surrounded by trees and wildlife. We had a guided walk with Rosie Inman Cook who runs the Natural Death Centre, and told us how green burials are becoming more and more popular.

Then we piled back into cars to visit Philpotes Wood, Nutfield's millennium wood, to view the different management techniques for the woodland and the open grassland area, where the last of the orchids were in flower. There was an interesting discussion about fruits from the hedgerows, and Jon Stokes magically produced bread, and jam which he had made from hedgerow foraging and which he shared among the walkers. In all, a very enjoyable and interesting day.

VISIT TO LALEHAM FARM

It is not often that Tree Wardens cross paths with growers of coriander, kohlrabi and ruby chard. But the two came together at Laleham Farm in Staines, when the group enjoyed a guided visit in July.

Laleham Farm runs to 45 hectares, and was the site of a large gravel quarry. Over twenty years, top soil was removed and set to one side; the gravel was extracted, and the top soil returned. A highly productive farm now occupies the site, a farm that not only grows crops intensively, but one that wins awards for its environmental schemes. In 2003 they won the national "Farming and Wildlife" award.

Charlie Bransden has run the farm since 1982. He grows crops with a short shelf life: spinach, spring onions, herbs, fennel, sweet corn; and flowers too: sunflowers, sweet william and wall flowers. The crops are picked early in the day, and Charlie prides himself that they can go from field to market in four hours.

A key part of the farm philosophy is protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat. To that end, over

a kilometre of hedges have been planted and are now kept pruned to an A shape to encourage bushy dense growth. Some of the older boundary hedges are of elm, and Charlie reckons he has been able to contain Dutch elm disease by cutting both sides severely every year. Normal practice would be to cut one side one year, and other the next. Wild flowers are encouraged, and there are beehives to aid pollination.

Charlie was an excellent host, with a stimulating talk that showed how trees and hedges can find a common home with horticulture, and even that most ephemeral of herbs, coriander.

NEW CHAIRMAN

The Surrey Tree Warden Network is looking for a new Chairman. Is this a job for you? Enthusiasm is the only requirement, and you have a strong and helpful team to help you. If you are interested, or know someone else who would make a good chairman, contact the Secretary, Chris Pead.

TROUT EGGS AND WILLOW BUNDLES

The Tree Wardens who manage the willow plantation at The Ranges, on the Thames in Shepperton are always on the look out for helpers. Here are the dates and directions. The work parties take place on Sundays between 10.00 and 1.00. Coppicing dates: **11th December** and the **15th January**, with time on the December day given over to making willow Christmas decorations.

The willow plantation is growing on a hectare of land at The Ranges, by the Thames at Shepperton. Sally Pemberton started it 10 years ago as an alternative to the houses that the landowner wanted to plant there. Since then it has been coppiced as a conservation project by BTCV volunteers and Tree Wardens. The willow is bundled into tall lengths, (7' - 9') and medium lengths (5'-7'). The main variety is *Salix viminalis*, but there are other varieties, including basket willow (Flanders Red, *Purpurea*, *Triandra*). The *viminalis* is best for living willow structures. Recently, the willow has been tied into bundles for the "Revive the

Wye" project. They are used on the banks and successfully create habitat for trout to lay eggs.

29th January: a creative day, as well as a coppicing day. Try your hand at making willow obelisks, fences and other willow artefacts. Lunch will be supplied, with a donation to cover food costs and willow teachers. This is also an opportunity to see the new Spelthorne tree nursery and celebrate 10 years since 20,000 willow cuttings were planted.

Wear boots or wellies, warm clothes and gloves. Bring loppers or secateurs. Extra gloves and ratchet secateurs are available on site.

Directions: The Ranges, Towpath, Shepperton, TW17 9NT.

Look out for the turning beside the letterbox on Chertsey Road (B375), Shepperton. Park in the field through the gate at the bottom of the lane. Check with Sally re weather and for all other details: 01932 227679 / 07778 370571 (and include an email address)

SEARCHING OUT OLD ORCHARDS

How many fruit trees make an orchard? If you are interested, and want to know the answer then there's a survey and campaign just for you.

Traditional orchards have been disappearing from the British countryside at an alarming rate: 60% have been lost in the past 50 years. The survey has been organised by the PTES, the People's Trust for Endangered Species. Over the past couple of years, an office bound team have analysed maps, and worked out where old orchards might be. But these sites have to be investigated on the ground to see whether any trees remain, and what state they are in. That's where Tree Wardens can come in.

Here's the experiences of the Nutfield Parish Tree Wardens who offered to survey sites in East Surrey. We were sent four ordnance survey maps in which some 60 possible sites were identified. Also included was a survey form asking such things as the numbers of trees, the types, the age, the average girth, the management, and the value as a habitat. There was a full information pack. So for instance, to answer the question: how many trees make an orchard? It is an orchard if there are 5 or more fruit trees no more than 20 metres apart from trunk to trunk.

There was puzzlement at one of the items on the equipment list for the survey: a long spoon. Not for supping with the devil, but for digging into trunk cavities in search of the frass of the Noble Chafer, an insect now in serious decline. And yes, the information pack gave full details on how to identify noble chafer frass.

So how did we set about the survey? We went in groups of two, long spoons at the ready, first to find the site, and second to survey it close up if the owner agreed. The maps proved reasonably accurate. Roughly two thirds of the sites still had orchard trees, even if only fragments remained. Most were in the gardens of houses; some were around old farms. Sometimes we found a hidden treasure trove: a field below the North Downs where some 60 over mature apple trees were groaning with fruit, where the grass was grazed by horses and there'd been no other management for decades.

So, a thoroughly worthwhile project to be part of, and fun to do, even if none of us found any noble chafer frass. Maybe the spoons weren't long enough. There are still many areas in Surrey to survey. If you want to take part, contact Anita Burrough of the PTES: anita@ptes.org

NEWS IN BRIEF

From Tree News

There are more trees than you think in Britain. The Forestry Commission has just done a new survey using sophisticated technology such as satellite imagery and has discovered there is 8% more woodland than previously estimated. Small woods in towns and cities have been included for the first time. The figure, covering England, Wales and Scotland, represents 13% of the land area.

Traffic calming ... can trees replace the camera? Surely not, but research by the Department of Transport in Norfolk shows that drivers drop their speed when travelling along roads with hedges, or avenues of trees. There is reduced peripheral vision, it seems.

From the Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission in England have just launched a free iPhone app, ForestXplorer. You can use it to find your nearest forest, download the trail map, and learn more about what you are looking at with the tree identifier.

Contacts and Membership

We want to hear from you, and you may want to hear more about the work of other Surrey Tree Wardens. Go to the SWTN website:

www.surreytreewardens.org.uk. It is there for you to use.

General Enquiries:

STWN Secretary, Chris Pead, secretary@surreytreewardens.org.uk 01424 730163

Newsletter Editor: Liz Ramsay, lizramsay@aol.com 07949 217783