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FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD Spring Newsletter 2018

www.fqw.org.uk



AGM WEDNESDAY MARCH 21 AT 7.30pm The Lodge, Muswell Hill Road

This is your opportunity to vote in next year's Committee, stand for it and have your say about the Friends, Queen's Wood and the programme you would like.

There will be a slide talk on the history of the Lodge providing a pictorial record taken over the years by Wanjiku and Murray, who run the cafe, since they took over its management.



Other dates for your diary

Sunday April 3rd 2.00pm at The Lodge. David Bevan's annual walk round the wood to look at flowers, trees and all that grows.

Saturday 21 April: Bird song walks with David Darrell-Lambert at 5 and 7am at the Lodge. If you want the early walk you can register your interest now by emailing Alison on alison.watson@gmail.com or texting her at 0753 0479170, as this always gets booked quickly. While these walks are free, donations to the cost (perhaps £5) are gratefully received.

Tuesday 24 April: Talk on birds of Queen's Wood by David Darrell-Lambert at 7.30pm in the Lodge

Looking ahead: Family Fun Day in June - date and details to follow.



DO YOU REMEMBER THE SNOW?

With Spring about to arrive, most of us are probably trying to forget the Winter. (Although, at the time of writing, there is renewed threat of snow, so nothing is certain.) As usual, a lot of Winter has been cold, wet and dark. But we were treated to one glorious day of snow in December when the wood was temporarily at its most beautiful. Families came out to play, including young children who had not seen the snow before.



EXTRA SIGNPOSTS TO MAKE YOU THINK

The snow also made a magnificent setting for Grace Adam's exhibition "Out of the Woods" where she added extra pointers to the signposts in the wood.

Several visitors to the Wood commented on the thought provoking messages, which ranged from the factual: "The River Moselle starts here", to poetic quotations: "Never ran this hard through the valley; never ate so many stars." The exhibition was originally



extended to the Spring Equinox.

NEWS FROM THE WOOD

As I write in February, still in a very cold spell with snow forecast tomorrow, there are signs of new growth in the wood. *Arum maculatum*, known as 'lords and ladies' or 'cuckoo pint', with its glossy leaves, are emerging from the muddy ground. The 'maculatum' or 'stained' name refers to the black spots on the leaves. There is also a green and white variegated form growing in the wood near Queens Wood Rd but this is probably a garden escape. The plant should have bright red berries in the summer but I fear the squirrels eat these, even though they are poisonous, before this stage is reached. Maybe they get a tummy ache?

Daffodil shoots are also present near the Muswell Hill entrance – these large blooms were probably planted by the original lodge keeper to enhance the approach to the wood and they continue to spread in this area. Recently FQW volunteers strengthened the dead hedge which protects these bulbs and also the native bluebells which will emerge nearer the lodge soon.

Once again woodpeckers were heard tapping on trees to mark their territory before Christmas. (New research in Poland suggests that woodpeckers all have different rates/ strengths of drumming and can be up to 40 beats per second! Faster and better quality will attract more females.). More recently green parakeets have been seen in an old nest hole in an oak tree. Four mandarin ducks were seen swimming on the Frogpool.



TCV volunteers have been doing great work in removing sticks and branches from all the ponds and also removing some of the accumulated silt which was blocking drainage channels in and out of the ponds. We now await the arrival of the first frog spawn. The 'Into the Woods' Nursery are often the first to report this to us.

WORKING PARTY LEADERS AND MEMBERS

One of the main activities of the Friends is doing small maintenance tasks to keep the wood in good order. The Friends

interested.

We particularly need one or two more people to volunteer to add to the number of people who **lead our monthly working parties**. This isn't difficult as someone from the Committee shows the leader in advance what is needed, where and when, and it would not be often. Anyone offering could 'shadow' one of us first to see that really this is just about getting out the tools and putting them away at the end, explaining and allocating work and staying for the session. If you are willing to give it a try, please contact any of the Committee, contact details at end of the newsletter. It is actually rather fun and rewarding!



Michael, Barbara and Simone collecting wood for a dead hedge.

MEMBERSHIP: Many thanks to everyone who has renewed their membership. It is not too late if you have not done so, details on website please. We are so grateful to the many members who have also given donations. In the last year you have helped to pay for the information board about the Medieval Bank and the hedgehog survey.

WORKING PARTY DATES

25 February

25 March

29 April

27 May

from 10.30 to noon. Meet at the Lodge. Tools are provided but please bring your own gloves and if possible a mobile phone to keep in touch with the working party leader.

YOUR COMMITTEE:

Chairperson John Dorken

Treasurer Michael Johns

Membership and Newsletter Alison Watson

Ecology Lucy Roots

Infrastructure David Warren

Arts events Jane Warren

Conservation and Management Plan

Sarah Graham-Brown

Publicity Janet Shapiro

Photos by Michael Johns and Alison Watson

Text by Lucy Roots, Alison Watson and Michael Johns

Mystery object - cover of drain just above first dip in Capital Ring Path, where the path to the frog pool turns off. (We are trying to trace where all the drains go in the Wood.)



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