



FRIENDS OF KINGSBURY WATER PARK

www.FriendsOfKingsburyWaterPark.org.uk

Volume 2, Issue 2

History of Echills Wood Railway

The Echills Wood Miniature Railway run a 2km stretch of 7 1/4 inch gauge train line through the park. Phase 2 of their construction works has seen the construction of a tunnel and extension of track up to Far Leys. Work continues on a station building at Far Leys but passengers can still enjoy a ride through the park courtesy of the steam, diesel or electric locomotives.

Normally, the railway is open every Sunday, all weekend when it is a Bank Holiday weekend, and during Warwickshire school holidays they will endeavour to run on Wednesdays and Fridays, subject to sufficient staff.

The railway is operated by a group of 7 1/4 inch gauge railway enthusiasts and takes its name from the word 'Echill' derived from 'Eche being an old English word meaning "a piece added or set aside", which dates back as far as 1000 AD hence the name Echills wood = a small copse that has been set aside.

The society was established in 1972 and had its base within the grounds of the National agricultural centre at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire. Due to the Royal agricultural society of England's site development and reorganisation there was no longer room to accommodate a railway there.

The group were offered a site by the Warwickshire County Council, Country parks

department at the Kingsbury water park in 2005. The recreation park at present attracts approximately 370,000 visitors a year. It is hoped to increase the numbers by at least 30,000 when the railway is completed. Their construction is based upon a phased development due to the financial situation. Should funds become available then this will enhance the building programme by allowing them to purchase more materials, thus accelerating the completion date. The railway will consist of a circular main line, single track from Harvesters station, (adjacent to the main car park) up to the 'picnic area' station and returning via a scenic route to Harvesters station (Phase one) From the picnic station, a double track main line will proceed north, terminating alongside the Far Leys car park. (Phase two). The storage for carriages and engines, workshops and loco maintenance areas will be adjacent to the road, Harvesters end.

When in full public service, the railway will operate a circular tour with optional change at Picnic Station for trains to Far Leys car park. This having a combined distance of 2 Kms. and will be covered using a variety of 7 1/4 inch gauge steam, diesel and electric locomotives with purpose built vacuum braked coaches. During busy periods they aim to carry over 1000 passengers daily.

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Recent Events

Friends Ramble

This went off very well, and another ramble around Middleton Lakes is planned for June 22nd.

An AGM took place on June 4th, where committee members were elected/reselected. Also the constitution was amended to change meeting dates and frequency of meetings.

Forthcoming Events

Water Park to Middleton Lakes Circular Walk.
June 22nd 2014.

Fruit trees for orchard

Calendar for 2016—get your seasonal photos of the Park ready.

Park Activities

Chainsaw Carvings At Kingsbury Water Park. Sunday May 18th

An amazing chainsaw carving demonstration was staged by James the ranger! Timber was transformed into unique sculptures such as; mushrooms, seats, birds, mammals etc. Carvings were on sale throughout the day. (from £10).



Also there was a steam engine / traction engine display in the main railway car-park.

Tame Valley Wetlands

Have your say on the creation of a new community wetland at Kingsbury Water Park in the Tame Valley.

Any Park users, we would be grateful if you could fill out the survey regarding this important project at Kingsbury water Park. Closing date June 15th.

<http://www.discovertamevalley.com/contact-us/have-your-say>
A plan of the site is linked there - but can be found at ..
<http://www.discovertamevalley.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Tame-Valley-rev-08-Kingsbury-1-2000-A3.pdf>

A survey/pedestrian count was also carried out at the Kingsbury village entry points on May 18th.

Kingsbury Water Park Run. June 7th

The Kingsbury Park Run held an Adidas Boost event, there was a new attendance record of 260 runners. Also in attendance were 3 Olympians.

Team GB high jumper Robbie Grabarz. Robbie won Gold in the European Championships at Helsinki in 2012 and followed it up with Olympic Bronze at London 2012 .

Richard Whitehead MBE. He holds the world record for athletes with a double amputation, in both the full and half marathon. Gold Medal at London 2012 in the 200 meters.

Amy Whitehead. Amy finished as the first Briton in this year's London Marathon! She has a 5K PB of 15:57

Flood Defences Update & Walk

The new 'flood defences' on the canal end of the Water Park (Bird Hides & Reservation) have been completed. You can now walk along the towpath & visit the RSPB Middleton reserve.



Water Park to Middleton Lakes Circular Walk.

June 22nd 2014 at 10:00 am. Meet at the Visitor Centre, Kingsbury Water Park.

You are invited to join with the Friends of Kingsbury Water Park for this 6 mile ramble. The walk will be approx 3-4 hours

Anyone welcome; free to all. Walk includes canal paths. The Friends will be including a litter pick along the way.

In the event of torrential rain the walk may be called off.

tripadvisor Excellence Award

Kingsbury Water Park gain tripadvisor Excellence Award for 2014.



Kingsbury Water Park was also showing on Midlands Today during its Springwatch season on May 27th. Tim Haselden was showing David Gregory-Kumar of the BBC around. Main topic was the Tame Valley Wetlands Project.

Contact

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For a chance to win an annual car pass, please complete a park survey at

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/VBZVPZR>

Next Friends Meeting at The Water Park Education Centre on Wednesday, July 16th 2014 at 7 pm.

Everybody Welcome

The group's aims are –

1. To be the voice of park users. Promoting, lobbying, fundraising, liaising, and negotiating on behalf of park users.
2. To help manage, protect, and improve the park for the benefit of the flora, fauna, visitors, and park users.
3. To promote, assist, and even instigate, activities within the park for the benefit of park users.

Visit our website at -

www.FriendsOfKingsburyWaterPark.org.uk

Amenities at the Park

- Old Barn Coffee Shop/café
- Information Centre and Gift shop
- Disabled facilities
- Three mobility scooters for hire
- 5.7 km (3½ miles) of permissive bridleway for horse riding. Permit needed.
- Many water activities (e.g. pedalos, sailing, model boating jet biking, power boating and fishing)
- Dogs allowed under control
- 2 children's play areas
- Nature reserve with 4 bird hides
- Echills Wood Railway, 7¼" gauge miniature railway
- Guided walks and events programme
- Ranger led Children's Birthday Parties
- Camp Site managed by The Camping & Caravaning Club (tel. 01827 874101)
- Broomey Croft Children's Farm (tel. 01827 873844)