

Friends of Jubilee Country Park

Spring Newsletter 2018



Chairman's Report

by Susan Folkes

Welcome to our new members and thank you to everyone who has renewed their membership and donated for 2018. If you haven't yet done so – there's still time! This year has seen many changes among our active volunteers. A major loss to the Friends was Marcus Jordan, our biodiversity expert, who passed away suddenly in October. Many members may not be aware of how much he did for the park. Jennie Randall has put that right below in her tributes to him and another greatly missed Friend, Bob Land.

Paula Murphy, our treasurer, is moving to pastures new and I am taking a break after four hectic years as chairman. Peter Runacres, a member for many years, is taking over the role of treasurer and Zara Jolly has taken on the role of secretary and jumped in at the deep end to produce this newsletter. Penny Russell has joined the events team and we have three new volunteers at the Monday work party.

Many thanks to our volunteer bakers who stocked our coffee mornings in Petts Wood. These successful events were started by Jan Coulbert who, sadly, passed away this time last year. Thank you everyone else who has worked so hard to make this year such a success and to keep the group going.

We began our first community project with a field trip in September, which involved almost 80 children, parents and teachers from *Bromley High School* and volunteer Friends. This project was to photograph nature in the park in autumn for a digital nature trail. In April, we will be repeating the exercise to record seasonal changes. If you would like to get involved, please contact me on 07976 409743 or at jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk.



Neil McDaid braves the weather

Jennie Randall has been working hard on our other projects. The new orienteering posts are ready to be installed and we are now designing the signage for the wheelchair route. Most of the issues we had with *idverde*, who are installing the path, have now been resolved. One of our wheelchair-using Friends completed the course in his electric wheelchair recently, to prove it is viable and in spite of the weather, he was delighted with the experience. Please note that the path passes through woodland and manual wheelchair-users may require assistance, especially in poor weather conditions. Way markers will be installed when possible.

Our first open committee meeting was successfully held in December with 20 people participating and it is planned to repeat the experience later in the year, when we hope to welcome more new Friends to join us.

Butterfly Transects in Jubilee Country Park

For many years Marcus Jordan, with the help of Tony and Angela Ruffle, carried out butterfly transects in *Jubilee Country Park*. This is a weekly walk along a fixed route through the park, recording every butterfly seen. The data is submitted to *Butterfly Conservation*, who monitor butterfly populations and distribution around the country.

We need volunteers to help with weekly transects starting in April and running through to September. Transects must be carried out on fine days but it doesn't have to be the same day each week. Counting butterflies can be a very pleasant way of spending a couple of hours on a sunny day!



Common blue

If you are interested in helping, or just want to find out more about the butterflies in *Jubilee Country Park*, we will be meeting on Tuesday 27th March in Tent Peg Lane car park, off Crest View Drive, Petts Wood BR5 1BY at 12 noon.

Andrew Harby, our site manager from *idverde*, will give us guidance on how the transect should be carried out, which butterflies are found in the park and when they are likely to be seen.

If you would like more details, please email jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk or call 07976 409743.

Friends We Have Lost

by Jennie Randall

It is with great sadness that I have to report that since our last newsletter was published, we have lost two very good Friends; Marcus Jordan and Bob Land.

Marcus Jordan



Marcus joined the *Friends of Jubilee Country Park* in 2007 and rapidly became heavily involved in many different aspects of our work. His initial enthusiasm was for butterflies and it was not long before he started walking the butterfly transect on a weekly basis, from April to September, at both Jubilee Park and later on Charles Darwin's former home, Down House. Such was his devotion to this task that he hardly ever missed a week.

Along with Tony Ruffle, Marcus started what has become a major feature in our events calendar; the annual butterfly walk around the park, which is popular with both adults and children alike.

Marcus soon became a key member of the Friends' Monday work party and alongside the site manager, he was closely involved in the preparation of the work schedule for the Friends. He was very helpful in suggesting a variety of conservation tasks and projects which might be undertaken to benefit wildlife, with an especial emphasis on the park's ponds.

Apart from his interest in butterflies, Marcus led many bat walks, small mammal walks and walks to investigate the amphibians in our various ponds and the reptiles hiding beneath refuges. Over the years, many people attended these events which were greatly enjoyed and appreciated.

He also undertook a huge number of surveys, all of which enriched our knowledge of the biodiversity to be found at *Jubilee Park* and elsewhere, as Marcus visited many other sites too, both surveying and monitoring. He also advised and assisted other friends' groups, such as *Darrick Wood*, with regard to small mammals, amphibians and reptiles.

Beyond friends' groups, Marcus took an active role in the *Bromley Biodiversity Action Plan* meetings and helped Bill Whitaker, of the *Kent Reptile and Amphibian Group*, to check reptile refuges across the borough. Marcus also became involved in a volunteer group on *Hayes Common*, clearing gorse, holly and some larger trees to encourage heather to return to this important habitat.

When not busily occupied by his varied natural history interests, Marcus could frequently be encountered in *Jubilee Park*, walking his much-loved dog *Rolo*, who very sadly passed away a month after Marcus.

Another of Marcus's hobbies was his well-known fondness for fiendishly difficult crosswords, which he would ponder upon with his friends over a pint at the *Sovereign of the Seas*.



The scope and variety of what Marcus did for the *Friends of Jubilee Country Park* cannot be overestimated. His efforts were acknowledged in 2010 when he was the recipient of a *Bromley Environmental Award* in the *Green Citizen* category.

All of the Friends, particularly those in the work party, will miss Marcus very much. We send our sincere condolences to his widow, Christina.

Marcus Jordan working at the woodland pond, which has been renamed *Marcus Pond*, in recognition of the contribution he has made. A magnificent nameplate has been carved by Alan Saban.

Bob Land

As one of the original *Friends of Jubilee Country Park* from its formation in 2003, Bob Land played a major role in the development of the group.

A member of *Bromley RSPB*, one of Bob's main interests was bird-watching and he soon volunteered to undertake a monthly survey of all the birds to be seen in *Jubilee Country Park*, discovering over the years a grand total of 65 species. These records were posted on our notice boards and were much appreciated by park users. Bob's most memorable sighting, during a workday, was a wryneck woodpecker on *Alan's Path*, a very rare find indeed. Bob led numerous bird walks through the park, which were always very popular. He also became involved in monitoring the bird boxes in the park with fellow ornithologist Derek McWalter.

Bob was a talented carpenter too and he made the most beautiful bird-boxes, raising a considerable sum of money for the Friends.



Bob Land with ranger Alison Bolt, installing posts for the nature trail in 2004

Bob was the sort of person you knew you could rely on. He would be there to help at all sorts of Friends events, both within *Jubilee Park* and beyond, including at *Keston Countryside Day*, *High Elms Open Day* and *Heronwatch* at *Kelsey Park*. He was also a very active member of our work-party for several years and helped to install the posts for the original *Jubilee Nature Trail*. Bob's knowledge of natural history was nothing short of phenomenal and he also had a great interest in history. He was of great assistance to me, both in the writing of my books and acting as a proof-reader for the revised nature trail leaflet published last year.

Sadly, Bob suffered from poor health for many years following a heart-transplant in 1995 and eventually a kidney transplant too. However, he had great fortitude and perseverance and kept going regardless. He had a fantastic (although perhaps not always politically correct!) sense of humour, even at the most difficult times. In 2009, Bob developed peritonitis and almost died. However, quite astonishingly and against all medical expectation, he survived. In 2014, I too developed peritonitis which nearly proved fatal. Having been through it himself, Bob was a great support to me throughout my illness and for that I shall always be immensely grateful.

Although frequent bouts of illness and hospitalisation prevented Bob from attending any Friends' events in more recent years, he maintained a keen interest in the park and the work of the Friends. He will be very much missed by all who knew him. He was indeed a very good Friend.

Monday Mornings in Jubilee Country Park

by Ros Martin



*John Feely
at work in the park*

Have you walked through *Jubilee Park* recently? We hope you've noticed that brambles around the edge of the meadows have been cut back, ditches have been cleared, the post and rail fence has been replaced along the bridle path, there are new posts on the nature trail and thanks to our team of litter pickers, the park is largely free of litter.

Andrew Harby has taken over from Darren Russell as our Community Manager from *idverde*. He will be planning the work programme for the next few months and giving advice on the correct use of tools.

In January, John Feely, one of our volunteers, successfully completed a living hedge-laying course as part of an ongoing programme of courses organised by *idverde* for our volunteers. Laying the hedges improves the habitat for small mammals and birds.

To find out more about our work, why not join us on a Monday morning? The jobs are very varied; no prior experience is needed and we work according to our ability and at our own pace. We have a lot of fun and a great deal of laughter! We meet from 10.00am until 1:00pm every Monday (excluding Bank Holidays and all of August) with a very welcome break for tea and biscuits around 11.30am.

The work programme, a map of the park and the meeting places are all listed on the notice boards around the park and on the volunteer page of our website at www.jubileecountrypark.btck.co.uk. Alternatively, please call the Friends on 07976 409743 for more information.

Walks and Talks

by John Bruce

Our walks and talks programme continues to provide variety and interest for our members. The coffee mornings at Petts Wood Methodist Church on 19th August and 10th February were very successful and the sale of refreshments, including delicious homemade cakes, has made a welcome contribution to our funds, so a special *thank you* to our wonderful bakers.

In September, Dr Judy John led a fascinating walk around the park, which not only helped us to identify many of our trees, but she also explained how biodiversity works in our park. Ros Martin led another walk in the same month, finishing at *The Ramblers' Rest*.

Our talks this autumn have covered two very controversial issues. Ian Tilbury of *The Badger Trust* discussed the natural history of badgers, their legal status, bovine TB and the badger cull. Peter Martin, who was *Head of Heritage and Urban Design* at *Bromley Council*, told the amazing story of *London's Green Belt* over the last 70 years and the threats it now faces.

Jennie Randall's quiz in January is becoming a popular regular feature. Around 30 members and Friends packed into the Garden Room on 25th January for a fascinating and hard-fought contest adjudicated by Paula and Simon Murphy.

On 24th February we conducted a small mammal survey with the help of Steven Lofting, the biodiversity officer for *idverde*. We have a full and varied programme in store for April to October, so please refer to the enclosed *Dates for your Diary* for further details.

Finally, an appeal for help. Ros Martin and I have been organising most of the walks and talks programme for the last three years and we could do with some new ideas and help. If you have any suggestions, or can assist with organising events, please let us know. I can be contacted at john_bruce@ntlworld.com. Thank you.

Social media update

by Sarah Coulbert

We have continued to develop our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/jubileecountrypark/> and currently have 82 people following us. Several recent posts and events have been shared by individuals and community groups, helping to extend our audience. This week, 65 users viewed content from us and 15 people visited our page.

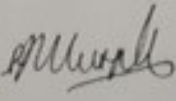

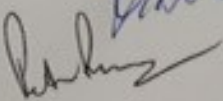
We have made improvements which allow us to display upcoming events more clearly and we plan to update our Twitter account more frequently too. It would be wonderful if we could share more of your visits and photos of the park with our online followers. Please message our Facebook page, ideally with a photo if possible, and let us know how you would like your name to be displayed. It would be lovely to share some of your snow photos and stories of how you have enjoyed visiting the park.

More volunteers are always welcome. Would you like to join our friendly team?

If you have some spare time and would like to help us, either on a regular basis or just from time to time, we would love to hear from you. All of our events, fundraising, walks and talks couldn't happen without our wonderful team of volunteers. It could be anything from organising and attending events to admin tasks, baking and helping with refreshments, or joining our weekly work party on Monday mornings. The list is endless, so please contact us to find out more. You can find all the information you need on the volunteer page of our website www.jubileecountrypark.btck.co.uk or alternatively, please call the Friends on 07976 409743 for more information about our work and how you can help.

Financial accounts for 2017

Following a successful year of activities and fundraising, we have also secured grants to support our work, as shown in our annual accounts.

Friends of Jubilee Country Park Financial Accounts 2017			
Balance as at 7 Jan 2017			£4,583.25
Money In:			£7,272.27
Subscriptions			£1,155.00
	2017:	£720.00	
	2018:	£435.00	
Donations			£2,666.71
	General Donations	£1,448.11	
	Charities Trust Donation	£998.60	
	Friends Forum for Stats Donation	£100.00	
	Legacy Donation	£120.00	
Grants / Awards			£1,380.80
	Walnuts Community Grant	£1,000.00	
	Jennie's Award from Bromley Rotary	£250.00	
	EnBro Grant for Waymarkers for New Nature Trail	£130.80	
Income from Events			£488.66
	Methodist Church Coffee Mornings	£313.66	
	Quiz Takings	£175.00	
Sales			£1,581.10
	Books	£583.70	
	Plants	£696.00	
	Other	£301.40	
Money Out:			-£4,341.17
Park Projects			£2,845.93
	Orienteering Posts & Rubbing Plaque Costs	£2,226.00	
	New Nature Trail Costs - Graphic Design	£230.00	
	New Nature Trail Costs - Waymarkers	£389.93	
Events			£429.29
	Archaeological Society Talk Costs	£40.00	
	Donation to Bumblebee conservation	£50.00	
	Bumblebee Talk Costs	£35.00	
	Hall Hire	£217.00	
	Quiz Costs	£32.29	
	Misc Walk/Talk Costs	£55.00	
Work Party			£521.10
	Provisions	£130.00	
	Tools+Equipment	£391.10	
Cost of Sales			£338.37
	Plant Costs	£114.37	
	Book Costs	£224.00	
Administration			£206.48
	Computer Costs	£72.00	
	Stationery	£134.48	
Balance as at 7 Jan 2018			£7,514.35
N.B. Grants paid direct to suppliers			
	- Petts Wood Residents Association Grant (Printing of Nature Trail Leaflets)		£496.80
	- Langford Walker/Acorn Grant (New Interpretation Board for Ray's Pond)		£323.00
Direct transactions from takings			
	- Donation to MS Society		£60.00
Signatures:			
Treasurer			
Chairman			
Accounts examined by			

Apologies for the quality of this image. The financial report will also be available on the website.

Two picnic benches in the picnic area have recently been replaced by *idverde*. The new benches are made from wood-styled recycled materials which will be low maintenance, weather resistant and easy to clean. They are a vast improvement on the wooden ones!

Access to the picnic area during the winter months and after heavy rain at any time of the year is often difficult, due to the large puddle of water which builds up under the gate facing onto the cycle track. At the suggestion of the Friends, this gate is to be relocated to the concrete path running parallel to the cycle track, hopefully providing puddle-free access at all times.

The dog waste bin on the Gun Site has also been replaced by *idverde* with a new dual-use dog waste/litter bin.

A memorial oak tree planted in 2011 in *Thornet Wood* car park, which has failed to thrive, has finally, with a great deal of perseverance from the Friends, been replaced with a beautiful new tree in *Thornet Wood* meadow. The friends of Bob Boyd, a *U3A* walk leader to whom the tree is dedicated, were so grateful for the Friends' help with this issue that they kindly gave us a £50 donation.

The pedestrian bridge leading across the railway line from *Jubilee Country Park*, apparently known as *Salthouse Bridge* (nobody knows why though!), was finally replaced by a new bridge in November, a mere nine months after the original planned installation date, due to technical issues. This bridge provides a valuable link to *Petts Wood* and is also on Section 2 of the *London Loop* route. It was quite fascinating to watch the precision operation of lifting the new bridge onto a train from *Iceland's* car park and I just had to be there to take some photos!



The new bridge being lifted on to a train from the *Iceland* car park

Last year, the *Friends of Jubilee Country Park* were given over two hundred postcards of the local area to sell, by a generous donor. Apparently, the demand for local postcards is so great that they have all sold out!

We have now produced some of our own postcards with brand new designs showing four local scenes; *Petts Wood*, a view from *Petts Wood*, *Southborough Lane* in spring and *The Chequers* public house in summer. Priced at only £2 for a pack of four, all profits from the sale of the postcards go to the work of the Friends. They make a great local gift for friends and family and will be available at our meetings and also at the *May Fayre* on 7th May, or please call me on 07840 542261 to place your order.

A request for help from the RSPB Bromley Swift Survey

We have been contacted by our friends at *RSPB Bromley* regarding a survey of swifts in the *London Borough of Bromley* from May to July this year. Swifts have declined dramatically in recent years in the *UK* as a whole and particularly in *Bromley*, and as a first step to reversing this trend, they are conducting a survey to identify where swifts still may be nesting in the borough.

Please could you spare an hour a month to take part?

Some participants have already been recruited, but more help is needed and they are reaching out to conservation minded residents and friends groups in the borough to help recruit more. They are particularly keen to have more participants in the area around *Jubilee Country Park* and if you could spare just an hour a month between May and July, they would love to hear from you. There is no cost to participants and no special knowledge or experience is required. Each participant will be allocated a local area to survey and all that is needed is a walk around for an hour each month to record any sightings of swifts in flight.

This is a great opportunity for anybody interested in conservation to participate in a practical way and a perfect way to get the kids involved. If you would like to take part or to find out more, please contact the *RSPB* direct at bromleyrspbrecords@gmail.com or call them on 07392 790719.

Friends of Jubilee Country Park Dates for your Diary



April to October 2018

The Friends of Jubilee Country Park is a voluntary organisation to help manage the protection and conservation of nature in the Park for the enjoyment of all.

To contact us on the day of an event please call 07976 409743

Volunteers meet every Monday at 10am (excluding Bank Holidays and the month of August) to help with the management of the park under the guidance of Andrew Harby, our site manager from *idverde* for Bromley Council. The work programme and meeting point can be found on notice boards in the park, by calling us on 07976 409743 or on the volunteer page of our website at jubileecountrypark.btck.co.uk

Every Friday throughout the year - Walking for Health

Meet at 2pm at Tent Peg Lane car park, off Crest View Drive, Petts Wood BR5 1BY for a gentle stroll around Jubilee Country Park and sometimes beyond, lasting approximately 60 – 75 minutes. Organised by *The Ramblers* and *Macmillan Cancer Support*.

April 2018

Sunday 29th April A walk through Petts Wood with Sam Pettman, National Trust Ranger

Meet at 10am at the underpass on Hazelmere Road, Petts Wood BR5 1PA, grid reference TQ 46682. A circular walk around Petts Wood looking for bluebells, anemones and other signs of spring. The walk will finish at 12 noon, back at the starting point. ***Dogs are welcome but must be on leads please.***

May 2018

Monday 7th May Petts Wood May Fayre

We will have our usual stall at the annual May Bank Holiday Fayre in the grounds of the Memorial Hall, Petts Wood Road, Petts Wood BR5 1LA. Come along between 10am and 4pm for a chat and to buy your summer bedding plants. If you can help with the stall please call 07976 409743 or email us at jubileecountrypark@yahoo.co.uk

Thursday 24th May Talk on Shrews and Water Shrews

Steven Lofting, Biodiversity Advisor with *idverde* will tell us about his research on these fascinating little animals. Meet at 7.30pm in the Garden Room of St. Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane, Bromley BR2 8AT. Refreshments will be available. Entry is free but a donation of £3 towards the cost of running the event and the work of the Friends would be welcomed.

Saturday 26th May Mini Bee Bio-Blitz to mark the Great British Bee Count 2018

Organised by *Friends of the Earth* and *Friends of Jubilee Country Park*, to be held from 11am to 12 noon. Meet at 10.30am in Tent Peg Lane car park, off Crest View Drive, Petts Wood BR5 1LA.

June 2018

Sunday 24th June Keston Countryside Day from 2pm to 5pm

Visit us at Hayes Common, alongside Commonside, opposite *The Greyhound Pub* BR2 6BP. The *Friends of Jubilee Country Park* will have a stall at the event, which is hosted by the *Friends of Keston Common*. A great day out for all the family to enjoy. Free entry.

Saturday 30th June Wildflower Walk led by John Bruce

Join us for a walk to see the wildflowers in bloom in *Jubilee Country Park*. Meet at 10am in the Blackbrook Lane car park, next to Bromley High School, BR1 2TW. Please wear footwear suitable for rough or muddy terrain. The walk will last approximately 2 hours.

July 2018

Saturday 7th July National Meadows Day

Meadows play an important role in the ecosystem by providing food and shelter for the wildlife that live there. They are also very beneficial for people as well, so come along to celebrate *National Meadows Day* from 10.30am to 3.30pm, near the picnic area, Thornet Wood Road entrance BR1 2LN.

Find out about the butterflies, flowers and wildlife of the meadows. Join in with fun activities, guided walks and quizzes. Fun for all the family. Free entry.

Friday 20th July Talk on Our Jubilee Queen

Jubilee Country Park is named in honour of our Queen's silver jubilee. In the year of the sapphire jubilee of the Queen's coronation, join us for a very special talk by a Friend of *Jubilee Country Park*, Richard Griffin, about his life as the Queen's Personal Protection Officer. It is a fascinating story, not to be missed. Meet at 2pm in the Garden Room, St. Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane, Bromley BR2 8AT. Entry is free but a donation of £3 towards the cost of running the event and the work of the Friends would be welcomed. Refreshments will be available.

August 2018

Monday 6th August Wheelchair Walk for the residents of Southmore Court.

Volunteers are needed please, to help push the wheelchairs and chat to our guests. Meet at 10.30am at Southmore Court, 437 Southborough Lane, Bromley BR2 8BQ, next to St James School.

Saturday 18th August Coffee morning at Petts Wood Methodist Church

Queensway, Petts Wood BR5 1EB.

Take a break from shopping and join us from 10am until noon for cakes and refreshments.

Tuesday 21st August Bat Walk

Join us for an evening walk at dusk to look for bats flying in the park. Led by Sue Holland, Community Manager with *idverde*. Meet at 8.15pm at the Blackbrook Lane car park, next to Bromley High School, BR1 2TW. **The event will not take place in bad weather** - please call 07976 409743 for confirmation on the day. **No dogs please.**

September 2018

Thursday 13th September Talk on Chislehurst Commons by Mary Wheeler and Peter Woodward

Learn all about the history, ecology, maintenance and management of the Commons. Meet at 7.30pm in the Garden Room, St. Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane, Bromley BR2 8AT. Refreshments will be available. Entry is free but a donation of £3 towards the cost of running the event and the work of the Friends would be welcomed.

Sunday 23rd September Open House London Guided Walk led by Jennie Randall

Discover the hidden history of *Jubilee Country Park*, from its beginnings as a bishop's hunting ground, to farmland, golf course and World War II Heavy Anti-Aircraft Gun Site. Hear fascinating, often humorous tales of past times. Meet at 10.30am at the Tent Peg Lane car park, off Crest View Drive, Petts Wood BR5 1BY.

October 2018

Wednesday 10th October Lichens - What they are, where they're found and how to identify them

Dr Ishpi Blatchley of the *British Lichen Society* will tell us about these fascinating organisms which come in many sizes, colours and forms. Meet at 7.30pm in the Garden Room, St. Augustine's Church, Southborough Lane, Bromley BR2 8AT. Refreshments will be available. Entry is free but a donation of £3 towards the cost of running the event and the work of the Friends would be welcomed.

Tuesday 16th October Walk from Petts Wood to Five Arch Bridge, Foots Cray Meadows

Join us for this very pleasant walk of about 4 miles following the London Loop through Petts Wood and Scadbury Park. Meet at 10am at the Tent Peg Lane car park, off Crest View Drive, Petts Wood BR5 1BY. Please bring a picnic or stop at Sidcup Place for lunch. Walk back to Petts Wood, return by public transport or continue to Bexley village, a further 3 miles.