

*Dolphin Creek and trees currently subject to trimming Planning Approval
Photo from Jim Garland*

Newsletter — January 2018

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Introduction

Happy New Year.

January and February weather are suddenly upon us – hopefully not too grey and dull but with days of sunshine to remind us that Spring is approaching.

2017 will go down in Association History as the year when we started to get involved deeply with the head of Dolphin Creek – with the Planning Application approval of the development and our being invited to accept the gift of the land fronting its west bank.

We continue working with the Environment Agency and the councils on the River Ems issues and hope to be able to report positive progress soon.

The attached Annual General Meeting minutes record our activities in the past year in greater detail.

Nick Madinaveitia

January 2018

Suzy Thomson-Coon



Sadly Suzy passed away on 30th December 2017. She and her late husband were staunch supporters of the SMPPA particularly in the early years and will be sorely missed. She was a well known artist and generously donated sets of her pictures to be used for our postcards. She magnanimously donated a large sum in memory of her husband, Maurice Broomfield – a renown photographer, which we set aside to fund the annual Photo Competition which bears his name.



Cormorants – Card by Suzy Thomson-Coon

Wildlife report

In the Autumn work parties cleared the East Bank in preparation for the ravages of winter, removing the spent growth, trimming the shrubs and trees. As usual we followed our established procedure of leaving sections untrimmed as wild life refuges for insects and birds.

Birds

The swan family continues to be in residence – the parents and five cygnets still often glide majestically across the pond following their parents. The family is very territorial, and frequently shoos other swans away. This year, for the first time in several years, black swans have shown interest in the pond – only to be driven off by the residents.

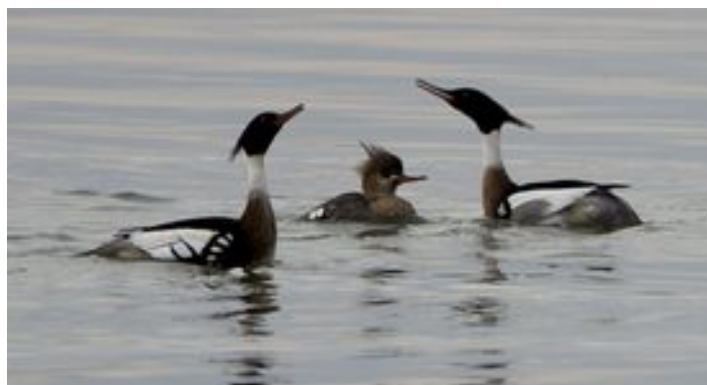
Early in December the pond froze over and Jim Hailstone recounted that an adult swan fell through the ice and the rest of the swan family came to the rescue, Thunderbird-style. The leading young swan used its chest as an icebreaker; pushing until its weight cracked the ice and all of them paddled forward into the cleared water. This continued for some 20 metres until they reached the trapped swan. Once it was freed, the icebreaker swan kept going with the family following behind.



Photo – Jim Hailstone

Merganser (= Goosander)

In the last few days a pair of Mergansers have visited the pond.



Red-breasted Merganser - Photo by Richard Summercocks - 2014

Pond Draining

As last Autumn we plan to open the gates early in January and to use the Spring Tides to flush away some more silt.

Work Parties

In the Spring we will have post-winter tidy ups and will send out details as usual. Volunteers always welcome.

Contact Rob Turner, Tel: 376508. Email: workparty@smppa.org.uk

Gift of Land

Current Position

The Wardle family is still waiting to complete the documentation which includes the lease to allow access to the moorings alongside the land.

As reported in the last newsletter the Association will consider the details, getting expert advice on the liabilities and updating its Constitution

Trees Planning Application

The footpath running along Dolphin Creek is overhung by two superb but spreading Cupressus macrocarpa trees. The owner of the trees, Jim Garland, initially submitted an application to fell them which he subsequently withdrew. He has now put in an application to trim them. For full details please look at the Havant Borough Council application <https://www.havant.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Week%2050%20-%20weekly%20list.pdf>.

Comments and objections can be lodged with Havant Borough Council by 10th January 2018.

His application states:

Macrocarpa 1

Crown reduce in height by 5 m. Laterals South and East by 3 m Deadwood and remove storm damage.

Macrocarpa 2

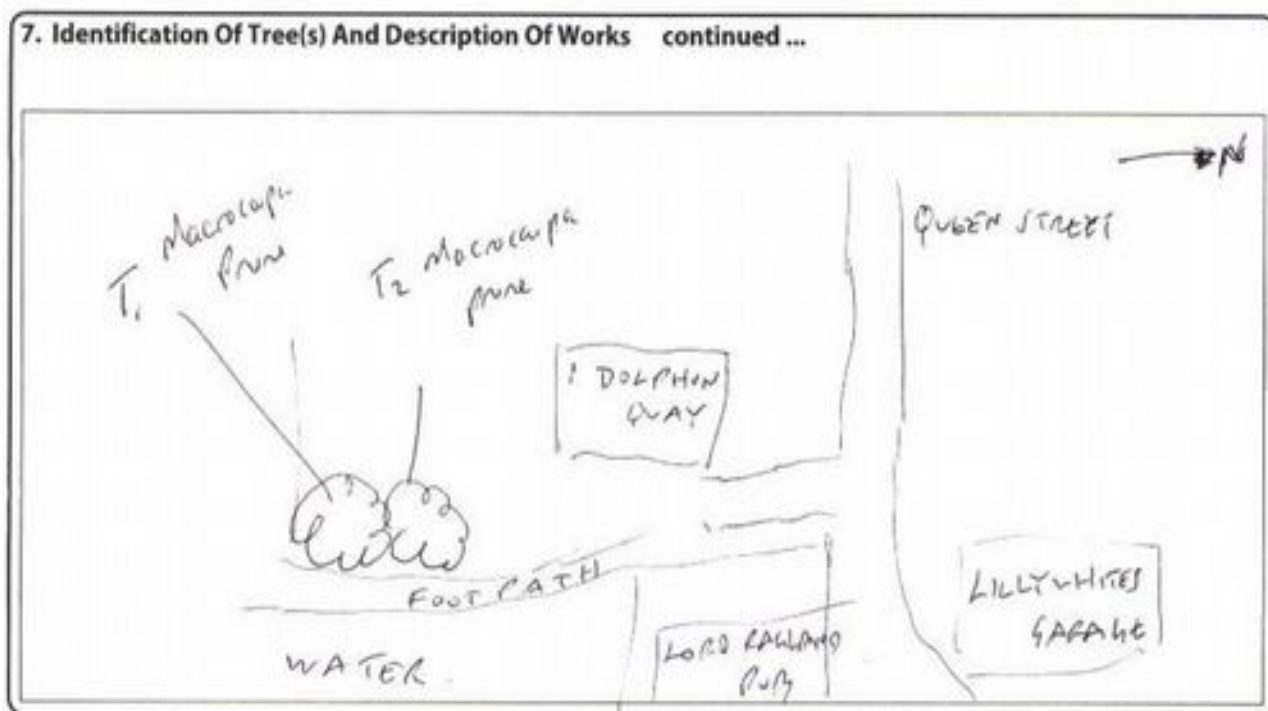
Crown reduce in height by 3 m. Laterals North and West by 3 m Deadwood and remove storm damage.

Reason

Reduce wind sail to limit potential damage,

Concern is being expressed about the impact of the proposed changes and the HBC web site shows the comments lodged so far. Whilst there is support for the proposal, fears are also being expressed that they seem draconian especially without an illustration of the proposed outcome. From an objective point of view the measures seem fair, taking into account the general condition of these evergreen trees. They are violently buffeted by high winds and their branches are at serious risk should there be a heavy snowfall. At the same time there is due concern that such heavy pruning could cause permanent damage and should be avoided. In either case all are agreed that the trees are a valuable asset and could be made subject to a Tree Protection Order. For more information please contact Malinda Griffin, (griffin-mt@myphone.coop) our local tree warden coordinator.

Please give this issue due consideration and submit your views directly to the Council.



Plan included in submission

Dolphin Quay

No further news.

Social News

Spring Talk

Being arranged – details will be forwarded when we have them.

Annual Dinner



Photo – Liz Tilley

The Dinner was held in the Brookfield in November as has become our tradition. Before the magical Raffle the diners were entertained with a sketch entitled “Betty in Wardleland” to celebrate our being offered the land.

The Cheshire Cat summarised the action and Alison Couch took the photos:



*When I woke up this morning my heart was full of dread;
Worried about my roses I got straight out of bed
Relieved, I found the milky blooms had not been painted red;
And I thank you all most kindly for the wonderful bouquet.*

*The night's performance that you gave was really rather whizzy;
the acting was first class, I could tell you'd all been busy
rehearsing; and your costumes made the audience quite dizzy
with laughter. In spite of all our fears the play was definitely fizzy.*

*Our hero Betty looked the part and was perfectly in role,
I hope one day she'll find her way back down the rabbit hole
and keep her nice dress tidy and have a cake for tea
After her splendid bodice-search for the elusive key!*



*The Rabbit was a charming guide though always in a rush;
Her ears and outsize watch were quite enough to cause a hush
as she spoke her lines in piping tones, and took us through her burrow
To meet the folk in Wardleland, her presentation thorough.*

*The Carpenter was ebullient, and the Walrus mask was scary;
They filled the room with noise and fun, but made poor Betty wary,
their banter kept us all amused, for they were far from dull
especially when we saw them scare away the black backed gull.*



*The Chorus led the play along with comments most concise;
he fitted well in Wonderland, his shirt and hat were nice;
He looked like a beachcomber, and he did seem most surprised
To see the whole Committee so effectively disguised.*

*The Hatter took us by surprise, his mask was so convincing,
he'd worked hard at being Brucie; he drawled, his walk was
mincing,
He knew the Forsyth catchphrases, and shouted them with glee;
His party was a triumph, with cakes, sandwiches and tea.*



*Dum and Dee were stylish dames, with skirts so tight and short
They scandalised us all; and most winsomely did disport
themselves up and down the room with dances and cavorts
Noisily and wickedly – I assume it was all in sport.*

*The Queen of Hearts was regal, yet scathingly mean and rude;
She dominated Wardleland with her despotic attitude
She was hideously overbearing and I wonder, was she acting?
For we all quailed when she was on stage, her manner so exacting.*



*As for the Knave we pitied her; she was right to be afraid;
she gave a good performance as a courtier most dismayed.
It was a pity in the croquet match she couldn't trust her blade;
and to get back to his Volkswagen she had to swim or wade.
I must just mention all the work rehearsals caused the cast;
And thank them all for being so crazily typecast.
The help Jill gave behind the scenes was vitally required
The music, costumes, props and masks were eagerly admired.*

*So take a well-earned break my dears. You can rest easy now.
Enjoy the Festive Season's fun, the mistletoe's golden bough,
Relax at home with all your friends, disport yourselves like lords,
For you'll be asked again quite soon to tread the Brookfield's boards.*

Dates for your Diary

Date	Day	Event
?? March	Friday	Spring Talk
4 th May	Friday	Photo Competition prize giving
?? July	???????	Summer Party
26 th October	Friday	AGM
23 rd November	Friday	Dinner

Contacts

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Photo comp.	Mark Phillips	01243 376756	photos@smppa.org.uk
Wildlife:	Downland Surgery	01243 377141	
	RSPCA	01239 667541	
Environment Agency	Pollution Flood line	0800 80 70 60 0345 988 1188	<i>Note - revised numbers</i>

Publications

Please contact Jo Greenfield if you wish to purchase the Bird Book, Notelets or Cards all on sale to support the Association.

