

# SMPPA Newsletter

## January 2024

### Winning Poem from the Annual Dinner – 30 November 2023

*written by Linzi Coull, Slipper Road (read by Sally Davis in her absence)*

An ode to the pond that we love and adore  
For the birds and the fish and the creatures on shore  
For the people who walk and who smile and who care  
For the laughter and moments around the pond that we share

For those who like fishing or walking their dogs  
For those who like watching or searching for frogs  
For the parents and toddlers and feeding the ducks  
For the youths in the summer and all of their xxxxx

For the neighbours and tourists, the young and the old  
For the bright summer sun and the dark winter cold  
Such a joy for us all, and bringing such pleasure  
It's a place we call home and a thing we must treasure

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For those of you who joined us on 30<sup>th</sup> November, I am sure that you will agree that the Annual Dinner at the new venue of Emsworth Sailing Club was most enjoyable, and we are very much hoping we will be able to hold it there again on 28 November 2024.

The early rains from October onwards have meant that upstream river levels are higher than most people can remember at this stage of the year. We are chaining back the tidal gates each month during the winter for around a week as usual; as well as allowing us to do jobs around the pond, this facilitates work at Peter Pond, Lumley and the surrounding area, such as the clearing of silt, litter and drainage culverts.

We had a busy work party in October (more on page 5), and the Summer Party in July was very well attended. Since the last newsletter, there has been some minor repair work to the tidal gates, sluice gate and pond banks; in particular we are currently monitoring the bank in the south-west corner.

More trees were planted in the autumn, and a trial section of reeds was cut back in the north-east corner and then covered in matting topped with sea club rush.

The next event is the **AGM (date to be advised by email)**. We do hope you will join us.

***We are most grateful for the help of everyone mentioned in this newsletter, and to the support of all our members.***

With very best wishes to you all for a wonderful 2024.

*Jo Greenfield*

(and SMPPA Trustees)

chmn@smppa.org.uk - tel 01243 371134.

56 King Street, Emsworth, PO10 7AZ



## **Committee Members/Trustees**

Jo Greenfield (KS), Sharon Corbett (SR), Simon Dwyer (SR), Simon Eveleigh (KS), Jim Hailstone (SR), Maire Park (HW)

where SR is Slipper Road, KS is King Street, HW is Harbour Way.

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## **SMPPA Annual Dinner (words by Maire Park)**



The Annual Dinner was held on Thursday 30th November. This year's dinner was the first in a new era: with the closure of the Brookfield Hotel, we have a new venue, the Emsworth Sailing Club. They catered effortlessly for 70 guests, and the room filled with energy and chatter. After the meal, it was time for some coffee time fun.

Over dinner, each table was tasked with writing a poem, limerick or joke that related to the pond in some way. With so much poetic talent on display, competition was fierce and laughter abounded. The winning poem was decided by applause volume and is included on the cover of this newsletter – it was sent in by Linzi Coull (who could not be there on the evening) and read by Sally Davis.

Then there was a quiz with questions about bird songs. The songs of ten birds regularly heard on the pond were played. The winning team was the Slipper Road team who

appropriately won an inflatable seagull. There was general agreement that people would listen more when near the pond.

The “guess the weight of the hamper” competition was won by Mark Davis (more below), so he got to take home the hamper full of festive goodies.

And finally, we held the Raffle. We had loads of prizes divided into goodie bags, and this year Máire made some heavy duty bags to ensure the goodies made it home intact! We had many generous donations of prizes from our members and from the following 11 local businesses, for which we are most grateful:

- *36 on the Quay* - voucher for 2 course set menu for 2
- *Crew Hair Salon* - hair straighteners
- *Emsworth Co-op* - chocolates and biscuits
- *Emsworth Delicatessen* - voucher for £10
- *Emsworth Heating* - 6 vouchers for boiler services
- *Emsworth Home Hardware* - 2 bottles of wine
- *The Deck* - £25 voucher
- *Driftwood* - 4 x £10 vouchers
- *Felix Tabitha* - lantern candle holder
- *Lord Raglan* - voucher for breakfast for 2
- *Vin Wine Merchants* - voucher for wine tasting for 6



The evening ended on a high note, with Christmas wishes and thank yous to all who supported the Annual Dinner and helpers on the evening, particularly, Simon Eveleigh, Betty Smith, Marion & David Rice, Claire Starling & Simon Dwyer, Jane Kidd, Helen Yoward, Maureen Twitchen and of course, to Jo and Máire for arranging the event. This is the main fundraising event of the year for the SMPPA and we raised a fantastic £816 to go towards SMPPA funds.

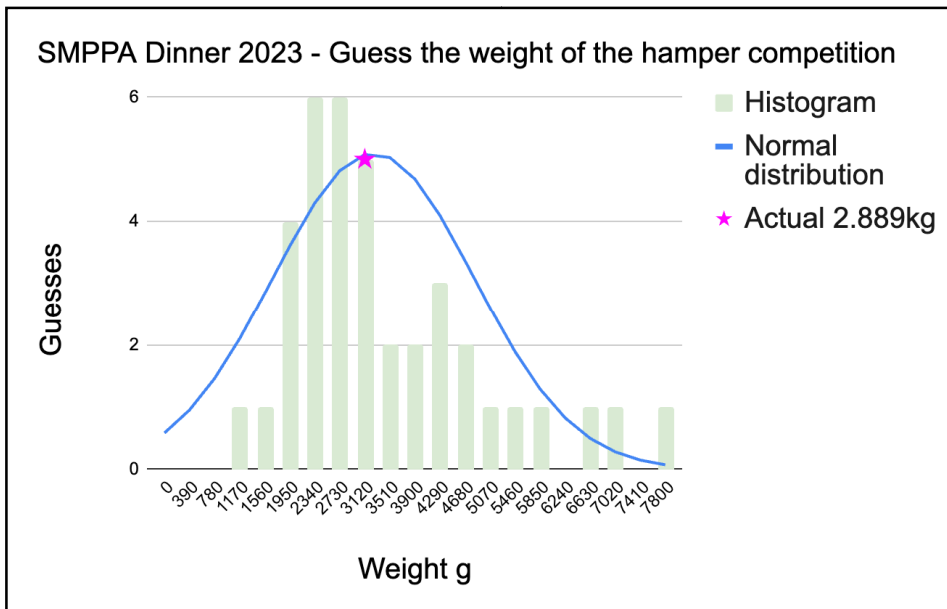
A very big thank you to Ollie and his staff at the Emsworth Sailing Club. Their delicious food and efficient service was the cornerstone for such an enjoyable evening. Now, we can look forward to next year’s Annual Dinner. **Put this date in your diary, Thursday 28th November 2024 - see you all then!**

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## SMPPA Dinner – “Guess the weight of the hamper” (words by Simon Eveleigh)

Thank you everyone for joining our Guess The Weight Of The Hamper Competition - with your generosity we raised a total of £67. The weight of the hamper was 2.889kg, and there was one very close guess of 2.9kg, by Mark Davis, which is only 11 grams over, so well done Mark!

For my interest I thought I would analyse the guesses, I’m sure this will only be of interest to geeks like me but here are the results:



Total guesses - 38  
 Average of guesses - 3.255 kg  
 Median of guesses - 2.8 kg  
 Standard deviation - 1.565 kg

What does all this mean? It means that, although your guesses were widely distributed, the actual Average and Median were very close to the real number which must mean something, but I'm not sure quite what!

I've plotted a graph to show what this looks like with the actual weight highlighted by the pink star. Thank you so much for your contributions to what was a very enjoyable evening.

## Sluice Gate Adjustment

Following the replacement of the sluice gate in late 2020, the woodwork had settled and needed some adjustment as the ratchet mechanism was slipping when used.

In November, Nick Gates (of N Gates & Co) removed the roller and brackets, dowelled the holes, re-drilled them in a new position and made two new teak packers. All the bolts were tightened, generous coatings of linseed oil applied to the woodwork, and all joints were re-sealed with mastic.



*Sluice Gate after servicing by Nick Gates – November 2023*

## Summer Garden Party

Claire Starling & Simon Dwyer once again hosted the Summer Party on 23rd July in their garden at Slipper House. We had a record turnout of more than 50 members, a most pleasant way to spend a Sunday afternoon as usual, and a wonderful opportunity for everybody to enjoy our beautiful pond in such lovely surroundings. Thank you Simon and Claire.



## October Workparty - bank strimming, collection of grasses, litter picking, filling gaps around tidal gate posts, trial cut back of reeds



*Strimming before the workparty, followed by volunteers bagging up the cut grasses*

We only strim the east bank along Slipper Road once a year now and the main job on this day is to collect all the cut grasses and wildflowers (after the flowers have dropped their seeds). This year the job got done in record time due to everyone's hard work! The delicious home-made cakes and biscuits provided are always a good incentive, so thank you to those of you who helped with providing the food and refreshments.

The grass cutting in the run-up to the workparty day was carried out by Jim Hailstone and his Team. Particular thanks to Jim, Rob Turner, Fraser Dibden, Keith Nicholls and Mark Newman. The cutting task is very hard physical work; unfortunately it is prohibitively expensive for the SMPPA to pay someone to do this for us. Jim has been investigating if we can find more suitable machinery tools to make the cutting job easier, but the narrowness and bumpiness of the bank makes this a challenge.

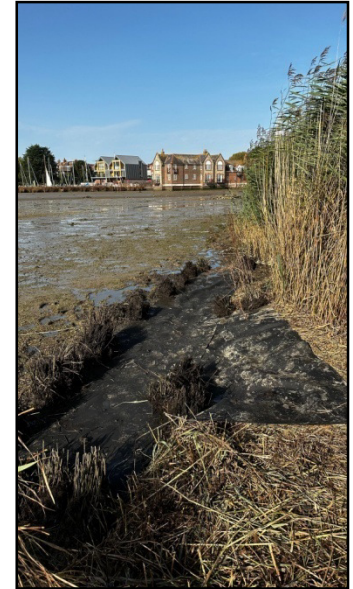
As part of the workparty we made a “trial area” in the north east corner where we have cut back the Phragmites reeds, covered them with matting and planted sea club rush which is not invasive.

On the same day we used foam to fill in gaps around the tidal gates between the corner posts and the walls, in order to attempt to reduce water leakage from the Pond, and also repaired more gabions along the south bank.

Thankyou to everyone who contributed so much on the day.



*Applying the “waterfall foam” to reduce tidal gate leakage*



*Trial area of reeds cut back, matting and new sea club rush*

## Monitoring of Pond banks and Footpath

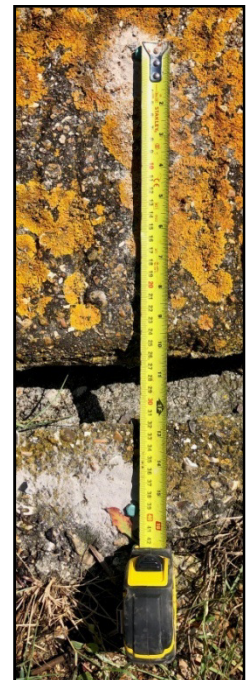


*Crack along south-west corner*

In August, Leigh Charlton carried out various jobs around the Pond, including cavity repairs on the west bank footpath.

He has set up markers on the bank at the southwest corner adjacent to where the boats are moored, in order that we can monitor any movement. We think it is likely to require strengthening here in the not too distant future.

He also replaced one of the posts that is used for chaining back the tidal gates, and dug up the remains of a bicycle stand that had become a trip hazard. Thankyou Leigh, for your help and expertise.



*Markers to measure any movement*

# Planting and Wildlife



In the autumn, Sharon Corbett and Rod Aitken planted the following 4 trees: Rowan, Downy Birch, Sea Buckthorn and Pink Hawthorn; these were in part to replace a sea buckthorn and ornamental hawthorn that were lost this year.

Thank you to you both for continuing to carefully prune and care for the vegetation along Slipper Road.



## New Instagram Account - [www.instagram.com/slippermillpond/](https://www.instagram.com/slippermillpond/)

Linzi Coull has kindly set up an instagram account “slippermillpond” where she posts some super photos. ***Do take a look and please follow!***



slippermillpond   Following ▾   Message   +P   ⋮

25 posts   83 followers   8 following

Slipper Mill Pond Preservation Association is a registered charity which exists to preserve and protect the Slipper Mill Pond in Emsworth.

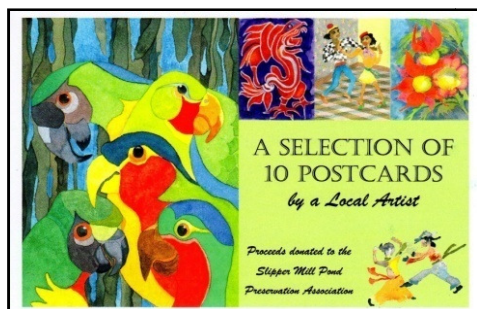
Followed by finalstrawfoundation

POSTS   TAGGED

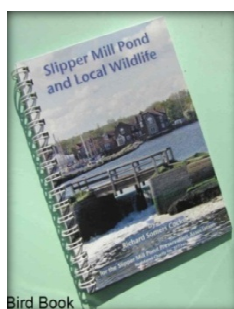


<b>Useful Contacts</b> (also available on our website)			
<b>Enquiries/Chair</b>	Jo Greenfield	01243 371134	chmn@smppa.org.uk
<b>Membership</b>	Sharon Corbett	01243 389994	membership@smppa.org.uk
<b>Social</b>	Maire Park		events@smppa.org.uk
<b>Police</b> Emergency 999 Disturbances 101	Call 101 to report antisocial behaviour – the more calls, the more likely the police will respond. Online reporting is at <a href="http://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/">www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/</a> - select “antisocial behaviour”. Hampshire Police have the same online reporting – see <a href="http://www.hampshire.police.uk">www.hampshire.police.uk</a> .		
<b>Wildlife</b>	Downland Surgery - 01243 377141 RSPCA - 01239 667541 Our Rural Crime Officer is Colin Booker (PCSO / Wildlife Crime Officer, Chichester and Arun Areas). Call 101.		
<b>Pollution</b>	Call Southern Water on 0330 303 0368 or email <a href="mailto:pollution@southernwater.co.uk">pollution@southernwater.co.uk</a>		
<b>Diesel Spillages</b>	Call 999 or 112 and ask for the coastguard as they have 24 hour coverage for this kind of incident.		
<b>Environment Agency</b>	All incidents 0800 807 060 Flood line 0345 988 1188		
<b>Fishing Policy</b>	Updated information and signage clarifying our Fishing Rules are on the Slipper Mill notice board and around the Pond.		

**Publications** – Available to purchase – please contact Jo Greenfield (see above)



*Postcards - £5 for a pack of 10 by a local artist*



*Bird & Butterfly Book - £5*



*Notelets - £4 for 6 (incl envelopes) by local artist Marian Forster*

<b>Dates for Your Diary</b>	<b>Event</b>
<b>February or March 2024 – date tbc</b>	<b>AGM – 7.00pm for 7.15pm</b>
<b>Summer – date tbc</b>	<b>Summer Garden Party – Slipper House</b>
<b>October – date tbc</b>	<b>Full Work Party</b>
<b>Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 tbc</b>	<b>Annual Dinner – Emsworth Sailing Club</b>