



Canada Geese with 5 goslings 14th May

Newsletter — May 2017

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Introduction

Dolphin Quay development Planning Application was approved by the Havant Borough Council at a meeting which appalled SMPPA members present – see below.

The sleeper installation and the works to the East bank have been rewardingly overwhelmed by the exuberance of the underlying vegetation's recovery.

February, March and April have been kind to us providing a delightful Spring. The Coots, Geese and Greater Black Backed Gull now all have broods of young which will hopefully prosper. The Spring Talk and the Photographic Competition were most successful and thoughts now turn to the Summer Party. I hope you will all come.

Nick Madinaveitia

May 2017

Wildlife report

Birds

In the January Newsletter we reported that the Northern raft was launched so in February a replacement Coot House was installed – soon to be appropriated by an industrious couple who took no time at all to fill it with reed fragments and other bits and pieces.



Mute Swan family from Peter Pond - 13th May

The birds have been most successful. The two swans from Peter Pond – who regard the mill pond as their very own have been fiercely territorial in addition to chasing away 'unwelcome' visitors

like black swans. The swans continued harassing a pair of Canada Geese who took up residence on the central raft displacing the Greater Black Backed Gulls (GBBG) who had to occupy much more cramped and spartan quarters on the Southern raft. From time to time the GBBGs have allowed cormorants to perch on the raft and spread their wings. However they can be territorial as well. There was an entertaining incident several weeks ago when a cormorant swam too close causing the GBBGs to respond by subjecting it to an aerial assault. The attack was just like a WW2 dogfight with the gull diving at the cormorant – who simply ducked at the last second. The gull was furious and executed most spectacular banked turns and repeated his assault from the opposite direction – merely to have the cormorant duck his head again and carry on swimming by.



Canada Geese with 5 newly-hatched goslings - 13th May

Early May was very exciting. First on 10th May the Mute Swans hatched their brood and they can now be seen proudly showing off their six soft and fluffy cygnets. Then the geese, nesting on the pond for the first time in some twenty years, produced five balls of yellow and were seen parading their gosling family. Not to be outdone the GBBGs hatched three chicks the following day.

Let us hope they all survive into adulthood.

Fish

Schools of mullet have been seen circling in the shallows on quiet evenings and the regular visits by cormorants, herons and egrets suggest that the pond remains well stocked.



Infrastructure

General

Our pond and its banks continue to be in good condition apart from the sluice and its apron.

East Bank Matters

Overall we have had a most successful Spring, with the daffodils heralding a most welcome surge of growth. Last year's bare sections of bank, disturbed when we placed the sleepers along Slipper Road and strengthened the pond bank, have disappeared and are now a dim and distant memory. The netting bags themselves are starting to be absorbed with growth sprouting through the holes and before long they will disappear under the green carpet.



Sleepers disappearing - 16th May



Bag reinforcement - growth

The volunteers' work has certainly paid off!!!

Pond Draining

The pond tidal gates were left open on several occasions in February to allow silt accumulated along the bottom of the main channel to escape into the harbour. Unfortunately as the flows in the River Ems were small there will have been little scouring along its length in both Slipper and Peter Ponds.

LERMG - Projects

The Lower Ems River Management Group (LERMG) continues with its work on the river valley between the A27 and the sea and the following elements are active:

- Lumley Cottages Phase 2
Works completed.
- Lumley Cottages Phase 3
A full ecological study is underway at the moment and the design of the protective bank to the rear awaits its outcome. The provision of an overflow weir for the river at the head of Brook Meadow is being explored
- Slipper Pond
Detail of potential works to the banks to cope with extreme river flows are being evaluated as a consequence of the the Brook Meadow weir scheme.

Dolphin Quay

A special Havant Borough Council - Development Management Committee (DMC) was held on 2nd February and the public were invited to attend to hear the debate for and against the proposal.

SMPPA members were there and all were disappointed with the outcome.

HBC had prepared a very full report covering all aspects of the scheme and the councillors had made a site visit the day before. Jim Garland spoke on behalf of the neighbourhood for the allotted five minutes explaining local objectors' point of view. He was followed

by various officials exploring issues. Considerable time was spent in discussing the implications of flood protection and the impact of the two southern buildings was explored. It was with considerable concern that we learnt that neither the case officer nor most of the Members had crossed over into West Sussex to see the impact of the scheme from the East side of Slipper Pond.

After a complicated and confused voting procedure the Members decided to grant permission subject to a legal agreement securing financial contributions, the dedication of land and to 17 conditions. For more information please consult the Havant Borough Council Planning website.

Local residents continue to be most concerned about the future of the marina and the mooring at the head of Dolphin Creek. They are exploring ways of keeping the area an active marine environment with both Havant Borough Council and Chichester Harbour Conservancy. At the DMC it was confirmed by the HBC planning officer that 'no moorings would be lost'.

However the now agreed development plans show a very narrow pedestrian access from Queen St, with steps over the new sea wall to one pontoon and a long ramp to the other. Neither of the existing slipways will continue to be usable. These limitations will have obvious consequences for all the boating community. The possibility of getting, at the very least, a replacement slipway is now urgently being explored.

Please contact Charles Ashe, Emsworth Residents Association email- Di Ashe and Family <ashe.family@btinternet.com> if you would like to know or do more.

Work Parties

As ever many thanks to our volunteers who helped trim the East bank and prepare it for this season's growth.

Spring Talk

On 24th March Lt Harry Whittington RA. of Thorney Garrison gave us an enthusiastic presentation about the role of the base and the soldiers' assignments as well as touching on its history. His enthusiasm for Thorney was infectious and we all wistfully wanted to have his energy and enthusiasm for the sports and opportunities that

are available there.

More details can be found on www.army.mod.uk and search for Baker Barracks or Thorney

Photographic Competition

The annual Primary School Photographic Competition, held in memory of the renowned industrial photographer - Maurice Broomfield was held again this year. Prize giving took place on Friday, 28th April in the Emsworth Community Centre, where all the entries were on display. Jeff and Gill Thatcher presented the prizes for the winning photographs from each year group and also Certificates of Merit for those felt to be worthy of them. Jeff also spoke briefly about the particular qualities explaining how the judges arrived at their decisions.

As in past years the event was supported by the Emsworth Arts Trail and by the Southern Co-op, who provided light refreshments. The photographs then were included as part of the Arts Trail and later displayed in the Co-op for a few days.

Theme – Wild Life and Chichester Harbour



“Toadie” Winner
Gwen Sargeant - Year 6 – Thorney



“Droplets”
Sophie Green - Year 4 – Southbourne



“Time for a dip”
Melody Dodgson - Year 5 – Emsworth



“David at work on Peter Pond”
Joe Fellows - Year 3 - Emsworth

Theme – Open Category



“Low Sun” Winner

Hazel Morgan - Year 5 - Funtington



“Dog”

Scarlet Vinten - Year 6 - Funtington



“Cast in Stone”

George Oiller - Year 4 - Emsworth



“Saturday Morning Music”

Joe Fellows - Year 3 - Emsworth

Insurance

Last Summer we were faced with a major hike in our insurance premium due to changes in administration within the Trust for Conservation Volunteers. We were very concerned as the price hike would have absorbed more than half our anticipated annual income from subscriptions and events. Fortunately we obtained a Small Projects grant for £965.72p from WSCC which covered the costs.



We will have to apply again this financial year for help for this.

Dates for your Diary

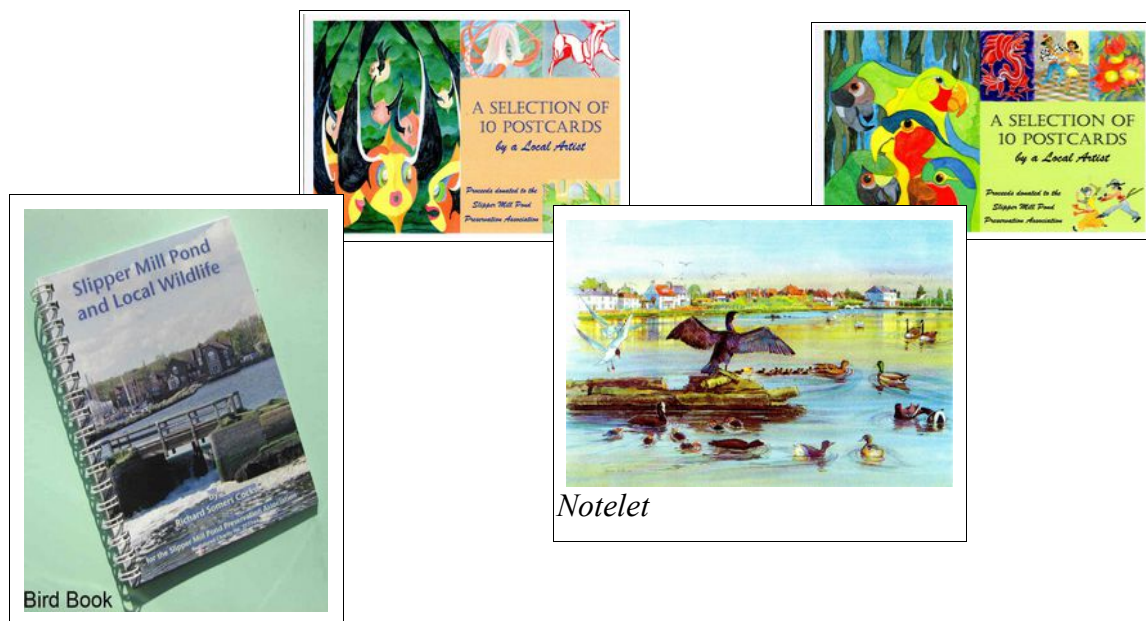
??	?? July	Summer Party
Friday	27 th October	Annual General Meeting
Friday	24 th November	Annual Dinner

Contacts

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	RSPCA	01239 667541	
Environment Agency	Pollution	0845 9881188	
	Flood line	0800 807060	

Publications

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



A special thank-you to Brian Fellows for allowing us to use his bird photographs and, unless noted, illustrations by Nick Madinaveitia