



WOKINGHAM DISTRICT VETERAN TREE ASSOCIATION

www.wdvtta.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011

This is the last newsletter I shall write as Chair of WDVTA for, as you will know, I am retiring at the AGM in March. Some of my reflections on my time in this post are on the reverse of this newsletter.

May I reassure members, though, that this does not reflect any diminution in my commitment to the Association's objects. After a 'sabbatical' break when Ray and I plan to revisit some of our favourite places, I hope to be back out in the fields and woodlands recording more old and important trees and exploring their history.

The development of WDVTA has been a great, and unexpected, pleasure. It has been wonderful to work with so many interesting and talented people. The Association's activities are in capable hands. Trees are such an important part of our environment and all our efforts are needed to ensure that future generations can appreciate and enjoy them as we have.

Barbara Stagles

Trees in Literature

About 70 people attended the meeting on January 20th at the Baptist Church Hall Wokingham to listen to selections of tree – related poetry and prose, old and new. It was a happy occasion when WDVTA members joined the Wokingham Literary Society for their fortnightly meeting.

We were especially pleased to welcome four student readers from St Crispin's School. Our thanks are due to Kerry Clissold and Martin Haslam who put the programme together so expertly. The list of poetry and prose readings selected can be found under Publications at our website www.wdvtta.org.uk

Veteran Holm Oak in Earley



This wonderful old Holm oak, which dwarfs people around it, is one of the historic and significant trees in Earley that Sheila Crowson will be telling us about at the WDVTA AGM on March 23rd at Dinton Pastures. Do come and join us.

Tree Walk at Cantley

On a beautiful bright January morning twenty-one of us gathered at Cantley House Hotel to enjoy coffee before setting off on a fascinating tree walk around the hotel grounds and Cantley Park. There is a surprising number and variety of lovely trees in this area, some quite historic.

Coralie Ramsay, WDVTA member and arboricultural consultant, guided us around with such enthusiasm and expertise that it was impossible not to be captivated by all the interesting details she gave us. Lunch afterwards was a convivial occasion and much appreciated by all

Coralie, with Maurice Monk, Cantley Hotel owner and promoter of this venture, plans more tree walks in spring, summer and autumn, at different times of the day. For details phone Cantley Hotel 0118 9789912 or visit www.cantleyhotel.co.uk

Forthcoming Tree Events

Oak Tree Safari

A small scale natural history of life on
oaks
Friday March 11th 8-10 p.m.

Talk by Martin Woolner
for Crowthorne Natural History Group

Parish Hall, Heath Hill Road, Crowthorne
RG45 7BN. Admission £3

Ancient Woodland Archaeology and Flora

Guided walk to see woodland
archaeological features
led by John Morris
of the Chilterns Woodland Project
Sunday March 27th 10a.m. – 1 p.m.

Meet Piggotts Hill, North Dean,
approx. 4 miles north of High Wycombe
on road to Speen from Hughenden Valley
HP14 4NF Grid SU 854 990.

No dogs please. Booking Essential.
Donations welcome. Contact John Morris
01844 355503
or woodlands@chilternsaonb.org

Woodlands in Spring Walk

**National Trust event at Cliveden
near Maidenhead
Sunday 17th April
10.30a.m. - 12.30p.m.**

Booking essential. Phone 01628
605069 Adult £7

Bluebell Woods - Guided Walks

**National Trust events at Greys
Court near Henley on Thames**

**Thursday 28th, Friday 29th,
Saturday 30th April**
Starting with coffee in the Tea Room.
Booking essential All tickets £9
Phone 0844 249 1895

Reflections from the Chair

People have asked what my thoughts are after five years as chair of WDVTA. A difficult question because there are so many. Here are just three reflections.

Trees and people need each other

From ancient times trees have provided people with wood for building and fuel as well as fruit for food, but they have also served an important emotional role in human communities. That primitive relationship to trees lives on even in our modern urban society. There are many people whose passion for trees is as powerful as I have found mine to be – but not all. We need to spread that natural love of trees more widely so people recognise how vital it is to cherish and care for them.

Old trees really are Green Monuments

It is well recognised that we should protect our historic buildings and conservation areas. Yet many of these are not as old as some of the veteran trees we survey. There are trees in Wokingham that have grown for well over three hundred years. These trees tell stories about how land was used in the past, not only for agriculture but also for parks and gardens. We must learn more about the history of our trees and enthuse people with what we discover.

The miracle of modern technology

Like many of our members, I did not grow up in the age of electronic technology. Working with colleagues who have such high levels of expertise has been a great awakening. Modern technology enables us to record and relate together all kinds of environmental information and to communicate with a wide audience in ways that would have been impossible in the past. And it is a revolution in running an organisation. I have found our experts to be kindness itself in helping me learn basic steps. If you haven't got on line yet – do have a try. A new world will open up.

May WDVTA continue to flourish!