



# PARK NEWS

Registered Charity No 1029479

NEWSLETTER NO. 70

December 2009

## Chairman's Letter

At present I have no new information about the Olympic Mountain Biking Event. However, I have received the latest copy of the Hadleigh Farm newsletter, published by Essex County Council\*\*. This publication indicates that the Salvation Army and the various Olympic Authorities have signed the agreements required to set the next step – detailed planning – in train.

It is suggested that the Mountain Biking is one of the smallest competitions in the Olympic programme. While this is most probably true, the influx of such a potentially huge number of people, both as the preparatory operatives and their equipment and the subsequent participants and their audience will, inevitably, affect our whole area, possibly permanently.

The newsletter, I am told, will have been delivered throughout the SS7 postcode area in early December. Among other information included is what is called an 'Indicative Time Line'. This lists approximate timescales between Jan 2010 and August 2012. Most importantly for us there are three 'Community Events'. The first one is in January 2010 the second, sometime between February and April 2010 and the third in August 2010. At present there is no information regarding the dates or the venues, but 'legacy' features high on each brief agenda.

I am aware that while many of us might wish, if we could, that Hadleigh Downs had escaped the notice of the Olympic Authorities, there are plenty of people, both country and indeed world-wide, who will beat a path literally to our door. We must vow to protect what is best of our area and welcome what may be improvements to Hadleigh through 'legacy' which are, so far, beyond our imagination.

I wish everyone a healthy and happy New Year and look forward to seeing you at the January meeting. *Rosemary Carrington*

\*\* for this newsletter on the internet, see <http://www.essexlegacy.org/hadleigh-farm/> and look for Download the Latest Hadleigh Newsletter

## Ranger Report December 2009

Soggy, boggy and quaggy – a fair description of some areas of the park after all the recent rain. It hasn't put off the cross-country runners, however, and the first running event of the winter took place last weekend, with more to follow.

Winter also sees the departure of the cattle from the park. We hope to welcome them back next year to continue their valuable habitat improvement work but hope they behave better next year – twelve of them managed to get out of their field and ended up in a private garden in Benfleet Road!

*continued*

## Friends of Hadleigh Castle Country Park

### Chairman

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### Other Committee Members

*Mrs Yve Dickinson  
Mr Donald Fraser  
Mrs Pat Holden  
Mrs Jacky Loh  
Mr Alf Pearman  
Mr Barry Wootten*

### Website

[www.fhccp.org.uk](http://www.fhccp.org.uk)

### Email

[mail@fhccp.org.uk](mailto:mail@fhccp.org.uk)

*continued* Despite the wet and cold, several classes of hardy schoolchildren have visited recently to learn about the Iron Age Britain and meet a Roman soldier. The Roman has sensibly been choosing to wear trousers rather than go bare-legged.

Our two Writtle students have elected to do a second year of work experience with us, coming out every Monday. Recently they have been helping to coppice an area of 9 Acre Wood. This will benefit the ground flora, such as the bluebells, and the regrowth will provide future fencing material for use in the park. Work has also begun on this year's scrub clearance as part of our ongoing habitat creation to benefit bumblebees.

A new Olympic Newsletter is now out and hopefully in 2010 more information will emerge regarding the event and legacy plans.

The stargazing event went well (thanks to the Friends for their help with refreshments). Sadly there were no takers for the poetry walk in October, but the Hallowe'en Arts & Crafts event was attended by 67 children who took home stretchy cats, vampire bats and clay spiders. We end the year with our Santa trail, with a Wizard of Oz theme.

A merry Christmas and happy new year to all of the Friends, from Andrew, Gary and myself.

*Ansgar*

Lots of interesting information, including events, on our website: [www.hadleighcountrypark.co.uk](http://www.hadleighcountrypark.co.uk)

### Changing Times

In the 1940's, long before the Country Park came into being, two young lads found the body of a man in a pond that used to be down near the railway line. Running back to Hadleigh they persuaded a sceptical constable to come and investigate. The officer, unable to do much, then had to climb back to civilisation to get assistance and again do the return journey.

In the 1970's, while on a walking holiday in the Lake District with a group of friends, a lady in our party slipped while crossing a stream. Falling heavily on her back she was in agony and unable to move. After a quick examination we lifted her out of the cold water to the shore. One of our party then ran some miles to where we left our cars while we carried her to the nearest road. With her husband the lady, still in severe pain, was taken to a medical centre in Ambleside where a doctor checked her out in the car. He advised them to take her onto Lancaster Hospital some 40 miles away where she was detained for a week.

How the world has changed! Recently, a lady I know, while walking below Hadleigh Castle was tripped by a boisterous dog and injured her leg. Unable to walk the paramedics who had difficulty moving her called up the Air Ambulance helicopter to lift her to their ambulance parked on the nearby road.

Then there was the case of two young girls who cycled over from Canvey to visit Hadleigh Country Park. Wandering around they became disorientated and with dusk descending the distressed girls phoned home. The Police Helicopter soon located them and guided rescuers to them.

It's nice to know that in today's world, however remote, the best of assistance is only a shout away.

*Barry Wootten*

### Events

#### Hadleigh Country Park Events

Events start from **Chapel Lane Car Park** unless otherwise stated.

Car parking charge £2.00

\*\*For pre-booking please phone 01702 551072

For more information please phone 01702 551072

or e-mail [hadleigh.cp@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:hadleigh.cp@essexcc.gov.uk)

*We recommend you check details before making a long journey*

#### **Sun 31<sup>st</sup> Jan - Tales for a Winter's Afternoon**

To celebrate National Storytelling Week, eight members

of Leigh Storytelling Circle are visiting the Iron Age roundhouse to amuse their audience with stories from around the world. Suitable for age 10+

Cost: £4 per person, including refreshments.

\*\*Booking essential. Meet: 3.30pm for 3.45pm start.

#### **Weds 17<sup>th</sup> Feb - Puppets on the March**

Snug in the Iron Age roundhouse, hear the exciting story of how Boudica and her followers attacked Colchester and London, and battled the Roman army. Then make your own ancient Briton or Roman puppet to take home.

\*\*Booking essential. Meet: 10.30am. Cost: £4 per child

### **Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Feb - To Infinity.....and Beyond!**

What does a galaxy look like? Could you tell the difference between Jupiter and Saturn? Find out more about these and other heavenly bodies at our stargazing event. Telescopes and expert knowledge provided by Southend Planetarium and Castle Point Astronomy Club. Hot drinks for sale. **Clear skies permitting.** Cost: Free

Time: 6pm – 8pm No booking required

### **Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Feb - To Infinity.....and Beyond!**

Time: 7pm – 9pm See above for details.

### **Mon 5<sup>th</sup> April - Easter Ori-egg-teering**

Can you navigate your way round the park to find all the eggs and chickens? Suitable for ages 6+

Meet: 11am – 1.30pm, start any time

Cost: £4 per child, to include a prize

### **Weds 7<sup>th</sup> April - Kite Making**

Make your very own kite with the help of the rangers, then send it soaring over the downs. Suitable for ages 4+

Meet: 10am – noon, start any time. Cost: £4 per kite

### **Weds 14<sup>th</sup> April - Wizards and Fairies**

There's magic in the air at the country park! Follow the trail from the wizard's cottage and into the mysterious woods. Will your magical knowledge be enough to solve the problems you encounter? Come in costume!

Meet: 10am – 1pm, start any time. Suitable for ages 3+

Cost: £4 per child, to include a prize.

**List of country parks events at**  
[www.essexcc.gov.uk/countryparks](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk/countryparks)

### **Events from the Southend RSPB website**

<http://www.southendrspb.co.uk/calender.htm>

**## Guided walks** cost £3 for adults and £1.50 for children. RSPB members and Wildlife Explorers receive £1 discount. Booking essential, by phone 01268 498627 or online at [www.southendrspb.co.uk/rspbbooking.htm](http://www.southendrspb.co.uk/rspbbooking.htm)

### **Wildlife Walks at Wat Tyler Country Park**

Thursdays: 7<sup>th</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 21<sup>st</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> Jan; 4<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> Feb; 4<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> March at 10.30am – 12.30pm

FREE guided walk each Thursday around Wat Tyler Country Park to discover the wildlife of the park. No need to book.

### **Healthy Living Walk at Wat Tyler Country Park**

Mondays: 11<sup>th</sup> 18<sup>th</sup> 25<sup>th</sup> Jan; 1<sup>st</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb; 1<sup>st</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> 29<sup>th</sup> March at 12.30. Brisk 30-minute FREE walk around Wat Tyler Country Park on a regular basis to improve your fitness in peaceful surroundings. No need to book.

### **Tues 10<sup>th</sup> Jan: Wildlife and Watering Holes Walk –**

Holehaven Creek, Canvey 10.30am – 12.30pm. Guided walk to see birds and wildlife along Holehaven Creek with the option of popping into the Lobster Smack Inn! ##

### **Sat 16<sup>th</sup> Jan: Birds From Southend Pier**

10am – 12noon. Join us as we walk to the end and discover the birds and wildlife to be found there! ##

### **Mon 18<sup>th</sup> Jan: Gardening in a Small Space 8.15pm**

SE Essex Organic Gardeners Talk by Cicely Morris St. David's Church Hall, 400 Rayleigh Rd (off The Rodings) Eastwood SS9 5PT. Everyone welcome! Non-members £2 For safety reasons, there is no admittance to hall or car park before 8.00pm. Carole Shorney 01702 201914.

### **Sat 30<sup>th</sup> Jan: Big Garden Birdwatch at Wat Tyler Country Park 10am – 4pm.**

This year's BGBW promises to be bigger and better than ever! Help us count the birds at Wat Tyler Country Park and afterwards you can make tasty treats in our Discovery Zone to encourage the birds to come into your garden or local park.

Free admission, small charge for some activities.

### **Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb: World Wetlands Day Walk**

**RSPB Wallasea Island 10am – 12noon. ##**

### **Sat 6<sup>th</sup> Feb: Wildlife Walkabout – RSPB Vange Marsh 10am – 12noon.**

This gentle informal nature walk is an ideal introduction to the reserve and its varied wildlife to see how we are creating a place for wildlife. ##

### **Sat 13<sup>th</sup> – Sun 21<sup>st</sup> Feb: Nestbox Week at Wat Tyler Country Park 10am – 4pm**

Our half-term family event returns! Make your own nestbox for your garden. For younger children, we'll also have pre-made boxes that can be decorated. Free event, small charge for some activities, including nestboxes.

### **Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Feb: Wildlife Walkabout – RSPB Bowers Marsh 10am – 12noon.**

Details as 6<sup>th</sup> Feb

### **Sat 6<sup>th</sup> Mar: Wildlife Walkabout – RSPB Vange Marsh 10am – 12noon.**

Details as 6<sup>th</sup> Feb

### **Sun 7<sup>th</sup> March: Field Meeting - Two Tree Island**

Follow road behind Leigh railway station. Cross narrow bridge over creek and park on left. Meet 8am in car park.

NOTE EARLIER MEETING TIME.

### **Sun 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> March: Guides in the Hide at Wat Tyler Country Park 11am – 3pm**

We will have friendly guides in hides with telescopes and binoculars for you to watch and learn about birds. All welcome. Free event.

### **Sat 20<sup>th</sup> Mar: Wildlife Walkabout – RSPB West Canvey Marsh 10am – 12noon.**

Details as 6<sup>th</sup> Feb

### **Sat 20<sup>th</sup> & Sun 21<sup>st</sup> March: Wild Weekend at Wat Tyler Country Park 10.am – 4pm**

A fun weekend for all the family, including a wildlife discovery trail where you'll be looking for wildlife gems such as birds, plants and other things dotted around the park. Complete the trail and you'll receive a prize!. Free admission, small charge for some activities.

### **Sat 27<sup>th</sup> March: Birds From Southend Pier**

10am – 12noon. Details as 16<sup>th</sup> Jan

Friends of Hadleigh Castle  
Country Park

*An Illustrated Talk on*

*Hanningfield Reservoir*



*Nature Reserve*



by

*Bill Godsave*

Friday 15th January

7.30pm for 8pm

St. Margarets Church Hall.

Lime Avenue,

Leigh-on-Sea

Members free, visitors a £1. Raffle, Refreshments &

Sales

Registered Charity No. 1029479