

## Chairman's Letter

### Dear Friends

I cannot believe it is a year since I took over the Chairman role, so much has happened.

We have had several planned changes to the board. Firstly, David Counsel, our long serving Treasurer, decided to stand down. I would like to thank David for his service to the Friends and wish him well as he spends more time in the West Country. We are very pleased to have recruited Assheton Don to take over as Treasurer. Assheton is a Peaslake resident and has had an impressive career in finance.

Bob Hughes a Surrey County Councillor has replaced Keith Taylor, we are grateful to Keith for his contribution over the years.

Richard Green has stood down from the Board. Richard has played a major role in the reorganisation and modernisation of the Friend's corporate structure, a few years ago. He has also very successfully overseen the investment of the Charity's reserves. Richard has been a great help and source of advice to me in my first year and I am very grateful for his support. Assheton will take over oversight of our investments and Dr Geoff Wyss, another newly appointed Director, will cover governance and membership.

I was delighted that we were able to hold the Annual Meeting in person in April at the Duke of Kent School, after last year's had to be held via Zoom. It was great to be able to meet so many Friends in person. I would like to thank Handa Bray for providing the refreshments.

I am pleased to report that after two challenging years through the pandemic, the Friends of the Hurtwood are in good shape and we can look forward to the future, maintaining and improving the area that means so much to all of us.

**Antony Collins, Foth Chairman**

### Foth appointments

#### New director in charge of membership

Foth has appointed Dr Geoff Wyss responsible for membership of the charity. His career was in analysis and innovation for high tech and he has gained volunteer and trustee experience in the field of education, as trustee of GEP Academies, a multi-academy Guildford trust.

Geoff is a keen mountain biker and walker with connections with mountain biking groups and he is keen to keep the Hurtwood open for everyone to enjoy and cherish whatever their activity.

#### New treasurer

William Assheton-Don, who lives in Peaslake, has taken on the role of Treasurer of Foth. He has had a long career in corporate finance working for Exxon Mobil here and in the US.



### Friends of the Hurtwood

Administrators to the public rights of access to 2,500 acres of land in the parishes of Albury, Cranleigh, Ewhurst and Shere

Registered Charity 2000053

#### Foth

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## Ranger's Report

**Fly Tipping:** Autumn saw an increase in large amounts of fly tipping which ran on into the winter months. Fortunately as I write it has decreased a little but there seem to be more incidents of smaller quantities, which still take up a considerable amount of time.

**Filming:** This has been taking place around Jellies Hollow and involves use of the surrounding land for the crew etc. This is not only a beneficial income to the landowners but we also receive a donation from the film companies.

**Hill Fort:** A new interpretation board for Holmbury Hill Fort has also been installed after the original board finally fell to pieces. It had been there since 2005, so I think 17 years of service is not bad. Unfortunately we had lost the original artwork that was used to create the board, but we are very grateful to Tim Taylor, who used to live in Holmbury, who managed to work some magic and bring a new board to life.

The new board does have a few minor tweaks to the wording,



but other than that, it's essentially the same.

Talking of the hill fort, we're continuing with clearance work on the eastern side and gradually exposing more of the original ditch and banks. This work has to all be done by hand, not only because of the steep slope, but also to protect the scheduled monument. We've cleared the view point from Holmbury Hill from the young birch that pops up and needs cutting back every few years and again cleared the view point from Reynards Hill, Justice James' seat, although it's sweet chestnut that grows there.

We've also installed a new gate at the rear of car park 4 which gives us access to Reynards Hill, after the old gate finally broke beyond repair.

**Storm Eunice:** This created a considerable amount of extra work, particularly on Holmbury Hill and Farley Heath. I'm not sure why Pitch Hill was spared much damage, with only one tree down, but the remaining sites kept me busy for over a week. A lot of the damage was from trees snapping off further up the trunk which takes a little



longer to sort out, mostly due to the risk of unstable limbs falling. Reflecting back on how much damage had been caused and thinking it was the most damage I've seen in some time, I've just read that it was in fact the worst storm, in the South East, since the Hurricane of 1987.

**Roman Temple Car Park:** We have resurfaced the entrance to the Roman Temple car park on Farley Heath as large potholes were starting to appear and also graded out the entrance to Pitch Hill car park, again due to large potholes appearing. Some smaller holes had started to show in the entrance to Waling Bottom car park too, so we filled these rather than wait till anything more significant appeared. I think there's no doubt we are still experiencing higher visitor numbers than before the pandemic, and this may now be the new normal. As a consequence, car park repairs will inevitably become more frequent as the traffic increases, and there maybe some merit in looking at a better, much harder, surface, but I'm keen to continue using the local sandstone in order not to alter the natural feel of the area that currently we manage.

**Queen's Green Canopy:** Tree planting for the Queens Green Canopy was finished in March and you'll see in the pictures that the work doesn't stop there. I think we have had no more than a few millimetres of rain since they were planted, so I had to make some quick plans to get water to the sites. My thanks to Ben Nicholson for letting me have a couple of 1000 litre water tanks that I can fix to our trailer and use to water the sites and along with some frantic Googling for pipe fittings, I've made up a watering system. Its gravity fed, so maybe not the fastest, but does the job for now.

You'll see that each tree has its own reservoir bag of water that once filled, slowly seeps into the soil around the tree over an approximate 48 hour period. Each site needs around 700 litres of water, potentially every week if this dry spell continues.



As I write this, the tractor and mower are being serviced ready for the grass cutting season which will soon be getting under way, it always amazes me how quickly it comes around again.

## Felday First World War Prisoner of War Camp

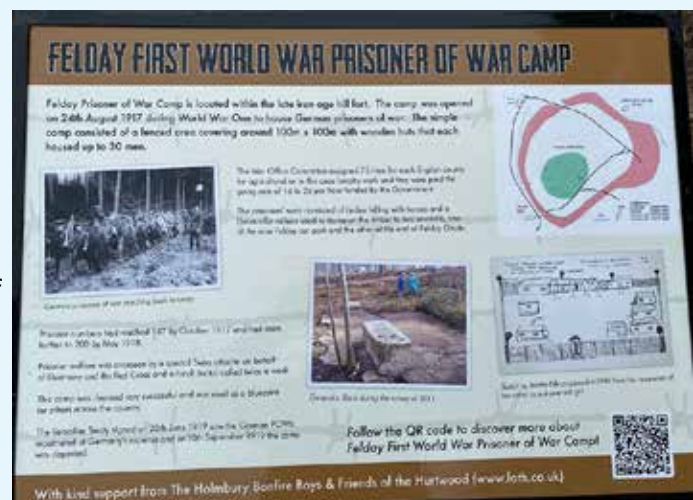


maining, but nonetheless it is still very interesting and certainly worth taking a look at the board with more information on it, if you're in the area. It is situated at the northern edge of the Hurtwood overlooking Holmbury village.

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I've finally received all the parts to enable me to install the new interpretation board for the P.O.W camp on Holmbury Hill, funded by the Bonfire Boys and Foth. It was interesting that the number of people I met whilst installing it had no idea that there had ever been a P.O.W camp, and to be honest, why would you?

The site of the camp within a late Iron Age compound is quite hard to spot with now only the foundations re-



## The Queen's Green Canopy



Thousands of trees are being planted across Surrey as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative celebrating her Platinum Jubilee. And thanks to the generous donations from local Surrey residents, members of the Friends of the Hurtwood and local landowners, enough funds have been raised to plant three small copses on the Hurtwood in her honour.

The first two were planted on Friday, March 25 with the third one due to be planted in the autumn.

The Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Michael More-Molyneux, attended the first planting as the Queen's representative in Surrey. The 15 trees planted on Shere Heath were birch, lime, hornbeam and whitebeam. The green bags that you can see in the second photo are to provide water for the trees as they become established. At the second site, on Holmbury Hill just across from the Pinetum, hornbeam, birch, beech and whitebeam were planted.



**Jim Hayward, Landowner, Michael More-Molyneux, Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, and Antony Collins, Chair of Foth, on Shere Heath**



**Directors of Foth, Nancy Loates-Taylor and Alex MacKinnon inspect the green bags that will water the trees.**



## RIP Peter Haynes 1945 - 2021

Peter was the Hurtwood Ranger from 1991-2006. He lived in Holmbury and the job enabled him to immerse himself in nature, a camera always to hand. This tribute was written by his wife, Lin.

"We really lost Pete – the Pete we had always known, kind, gentle... and stubborn! – a few years ago after he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. A friend who also had Alzheimer's said "Al" had come to live with them. How true. Pete has always been my rock – the name Peter means Rock.

Pete was a northerner, born in Sunderland nearly 77 years ago. When he was about 15, his father's new job meant a move to Ashted. He studied mechanical engineering at Imperial College where he managed a 2.1 despite spending long hours playing bridge when he should have been in lectures! He loved sport, especially football – supporting Middlesbrough and Arsenal and, latterly, Liverpool and playing for his school and, together with cricket, playing for Holmbury St Mary for many years. His parents were both good golfers (his mother played off scratch for a while) so it was no surprise that Pete was also a single figure handicap golfer.

Pete's four loves over the years were karting, fishing, birdwatching and drumming. His Kart, number 303, was his pride and joy and, in his early twenties, he raced at various venues including Oulton Park and Brands Hatch.

His love of all kinds of fishing lasted a lifetime. Whether course fishing, fly fishing, sea fishing or big game fishing (he caught a whopping marlin off the Kenyan coast), he loved them all. He also had a lifelong love of all things "nature", especially bird-watching. If anyone knows what I can do with hundreds of slides of birds, all neatly catalogued, I would love to hear from you!

However, drumming was a passion whether on drums, congas, his knees or the table using his knife and fork as drum sticks! Many a time I've had to stop him in restaurants! As a teenager, he joined The Cyclones, a local band in Ashted and he continued to play with them in their various incarnations for many years. Just before lockdown, some of them came and played at a small birthday party in our home and Pete played the congas, grinning the whole way through as he was so happy! Work wise, Pete's first job was with BSA in Birmingham as a graduate apprentice. He fell in love with the computer and so began his IT career for the next 25 or so years, finally managing multi-million pound systems for the Army.

He had the classic midlife crisis, wangled a redundancy from Plessey, and found himself in the right place at the right time, and thanks to his photography, notably of badgers, he became the countryside ranger for the Hurtwood, from 1991 until he retired in 2006. Some of our happiest years were the 37 years we lived in Holmbury St Mary – including Bonfire Nights when The Cyclones played at the Village Club after the fireworks.

We have been members of St Saviour's Church in Guildford for some 25 or more years. Since our move to Bramley, we also became regular members of Womersley church too. Pete's faith meant a lot to him although he didn't speak about it much. His health started to noticeably deteriorate as Alzheimer's took hold. He became a wanderer, "escaping the house" – through a window if doors were locked – and he would just walk and walk, usually towards Guildford and often many times – and many miles – a day. We were at the canal at Loxwood when he went AWOL. After an hour I called the police. 11 police cars turned up, Search and Rescue plus a drone operator. They were obviously worried that he was actually in the canal. What had happened was that he had walked the 10 miles home, along a main road with no pavement!

Then his speech began to go, finally leaving him altogether. He spent four months in a psychiatric assessment unit in Epsom before going into Cedar Court Care Home in Cranleigh. There he was well looked after and, as a family, we thank them for their kindness and for all they did for him.

Pete was the love of my life since I was 15, husband for 55 years, father of four – Graham, Niki and Jo plus Jackie in Australia, grandfather of Kieran and Izzy plus Max and Chloe in Australia; big brother of David, Step brother to Erica and Bee. We will miss you Pete but we are thankful that you were a part of our lives and glad that you are now in a much better place. Lin Haynes



## Forestry update

The strategy for reforesting the Hurtwood as mature trees are harvested has changed. Alex Wilks of Batcheller Monkhouse, who manages the forestry operation said that due to the recent dry springs, possibly due to climate change, Scots pine seedlings were struggling to grow in areas that had been clear felled: "Baby trees need rain from February to June to stand a chance of survival."

Alex explained that instead of continuing to clear fell this winter, areas have just been thinned to allow remaining trees more space to develop but also to create a better environment for seedlings to germinate and grow around them.

"We are now having continuous-cover forestry so that in 20 years' time when the mature trees are harvested the next generation of trees will already be there," he said.

Because of the poor regeneration of two blocks of clear fell at the northern Peaslake end of the Hurtwood, the estate had planted an alternative to Scots pine – Douglas Fir. This is the first time they have had to resort to planting as opposed to leaving the forest to regenerate naturally.

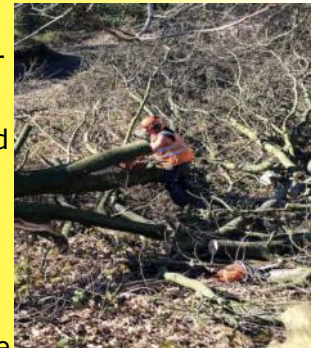


**Douglas Fir**

"We plan to diversify," he said, "And Douglas Fir is a lovely tree and it has done well in the Pinetum. Depending on how well they do we might plant them in the future but in most places the Scots pine comes through very well."



- Provide a full time Ranger, **Mark Beaumont**
- Manage 30 miles of registered footpaths and bridleways, 30 miles of unofficial tracks, a network of firebreaks and 14 car parks, to provide unrivalled public access across the Hurtwood.
- Protect and conserve the natural environment.
- Create and preserve wildlife habitats.
- Maintain the panoramic views from the tops of the Hurtwood hills.
- Clear and prevent litter and fly tipping.
- Protect three scheduled monuments including Holmbury Hill Iron Age Hill Fort.
- Promote educational activities to encourage children to treasure the countryside.



**Please support Foth**

**Thank you!**



## THE BENEFIT OF LEGACIES

Over the years, the charity has been generously supported by a number of benefactors who have made bequests from their estates. These gifts have enabled us to meet some major commitments which would be out of reach if funded from membership donations alone.

Here are two recent examples of this:

- We have been able to upgrade our tractor so that the ranger can carry out a much greater variety of work on the Hurtwood without recourse to external contractors;
- We have carried out some restoration work on the Hill Fort at Holmbury Hill so that visitors can see its outlines more easily.

If we did not have the benefit of capital gifts we would soon find ourselves without the resources to enhance the Hurtwood for the enjoyment of all.

When you next come to write or update your will, do please consider including a bequest to Friends of the Hurtwood (Registered Charity no 200053), to help us keep the Hurtwood accessible for all to enjoy.