

Porter Valley News

The newsletter of Friends of the Porter Valley - Registered Charity No. 1069865



Issue 98

July 2020

Virtual Easter Bonnet Competition

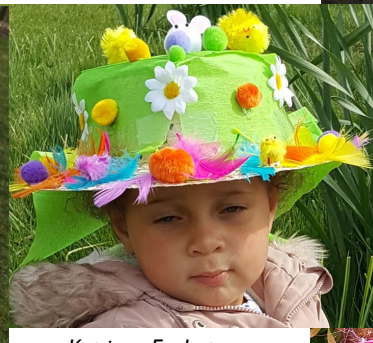
With the Duck Race cancelled this year there was many a sigh of disappointment from those who look forward to the annual tradition of dropping 2500 ducks into the river, and relief from those who realised they had a year off from the manic process of organising it! However, all was not quite lost as it wasn't long before the idea of maintaining the Easter Bonnet Competition in a virtual format was raised and, with a bit of consideration about



William Grundy



Charlotte Cook



Katrina Eggleston



Selina Jennings



Eleanor Kay



Freya Siddiqui

exactly how that would work and how prizes might be awarded and delivered, we had a plan.

Fortunately, even though we only had a few days, our online accounts with Facebook and Twitter meant we could publicise the Virtual Easter Bonnet Competition quite far and wide and it wasn't long before we had people sending photos in of their entries. We didn't charge for entry although several people were kind enough to make a small donation to the Forge Dam Fund. The judging was left to Glynis and Mike through the medium of Zoom(!) which didn't work out as difficult as we feared, and the winners were then contacted via email.

Thank you to everyone who entered.

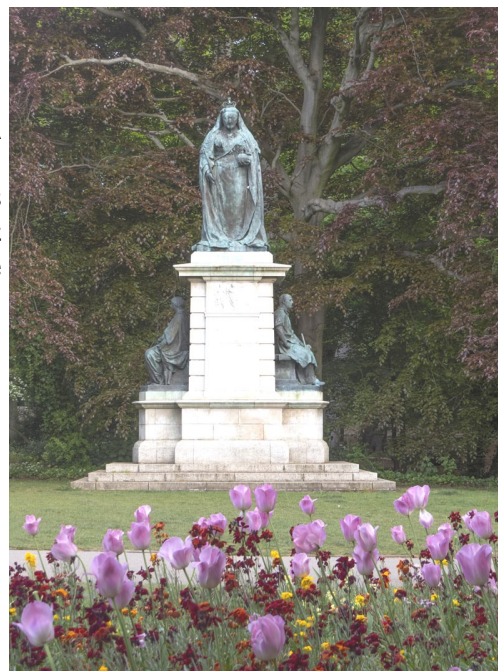
Mike Halliwell

Inside this issue:

- Leaflets in press 2
- Fuure proofing 2
- Loosening lockdown 3
- Photos needed for calendar and cards 3
- Shepherd Wheel 3
- Bingham Park 4
- A weird world 4
- Contact details 4
- Membership details 4
- Committee members 4
- Activities 4

Leaflets in press

At the beginning of 2020 it was decided that FoPV needed some new material to promote both itself and the valley. A 'design group' met in March before lockdown began and thereafter a few of us have been devising a core of leaflets with an identifiable FoPV 'brand' which will hopefully stand out in displays. Sue Turner (locked down in the E. Midlands), the Egglestones & Mike Halliwell have been the driving force here.



Coming soon, via the website, hard copy, or both, we shall be able to offer a leaflet providing a brief history of Endcliffe Park, a Bingham Park leaflet describing the Park's

history and on-going restoration of the sports areas carried out by the Bingham Park Community Group. Mike has redesigned the FoPV membership leaflet to match the new 'brand'. A new member, Lynne Fox, has kindly offered to put together an item on the legacy which Thomas Boulsover left in the valley.

There are plans for a Shepherd Wheel leaflet. Work is taking place to produce others: for Forge Dam looking at its history and restoration; the Wire Mill stretch looking at the natural history, another on the trees of Endcliffe Park. So, all being well, we should have eight leaflets by the end of the year to help promote the valley and of course The Friends of the Porter Valley.

Meanwhile, the restraints of lockdown have done little to deter Sue from producing a magnificent selection of family activity trails, which are now available to download from the FoPV website. They provide interest for any generation and allow for coffee, cake and ice cream stops along the way. Sue would like feedback on her trails so if you have any comments or suggestions let her know via email mail@fopv.org.uk

The Design Team



Future proofing: For all its disadvantages, the lockdown did give us all more time to take stock of our lives and think about useful changes to make. So our Treasurer David Young and I took the opportunity of a damp garden face to face (but at 2 metres distancing of course!) to look at succession planning. There are ten of us on the committee, each busy with specific tasks, and in some cases beginning to be aware of our age! We have excellent team support from several members, but we need to begin to introduce new committee members to ensure our activities remain well managed and sustainable in the future. We would be very keen to hear from any member who thinks they might like to join the team. I am not going to specify any particular skills or interests... it is enthusiasm we are looking for, and we expect to be able to tailor tasks to suit people's interests and arrange a familiarisation plan. Please let me know if you would like to chat about possibilities: ann@lesage.org.uk or 07790250087

Ann le Sage



Loosening Lockdown

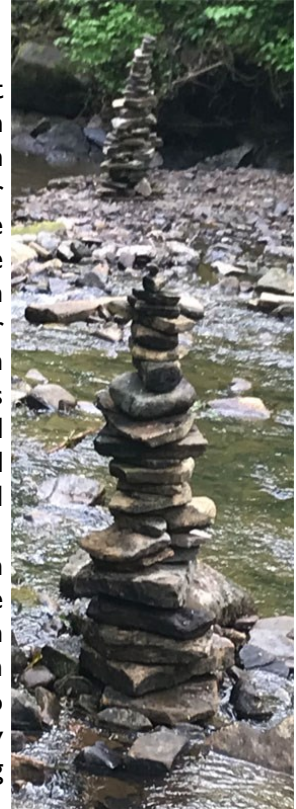
I do hope all of you have coped well over the last four months, and as you saw from my interim news pages, our committee members have been busy getting ready for a revival of FoPV's regular activities. Regretfully we decided to cancel the August Open Meeting but we still expect to be able to run the AGM as usual at Bents Green Church hall on 4th November 2020, and keep our date with Pauline Burnett who is to speak on Abbeydale Forge. But, just in case it cannot run as usual, we shall email you the papers (annual report, accounts, minutes from 2019) and information about how to receive your essential clearance and approvals.

It was wonderful to see both the Cafes open again: Forge Dam in early June, with beaming smiles beyond a serving window and external delivery under the awning... thank goodness given the rainy days! At the time of writing FoPV plan to be there in force on 9 July ...24 volunteers marshalled into 4 teams, each with a team leader and allocated to 4 specific locations and tasks. There is so much clearance to do everywhere in the valley after 17 weeks without any conservation work. All workdays have to be organised on a prior booking arrangement for the time being, with social distancing and small groups only.

Two of us tested the new Tuesday workday routine under Covid 19 rules: Caroline Egglestone and I wrestled with couch grass, cleavers, thistles, nettles and countless more weeds along the playground margins. It was good to don the yellow Viz jackets again and work on something beneficial to the community, even if we were two metres apart and the weeds largely defeated us. Endcliffe Park Cafe opened on 15 June, again a beautifully orchestrated external service. Cheryl McCormick sprang into action with renewed duckfood supplies to the Endcliffe Cafe: you may smile, but it earns FoPV quite a bit, and the ducks are happy!

Anyone wanting more information about conservation work please contact Dave Clegg or via the website.

Ann le Sage



Photos needed for the 2021 calendar and Christmas cards

Now I know many members have been snapping while walking through the valley but not many photos have come to me. Could you have a look through your images and send any you are particularly proud of? I especially need some wintry scenes, as we had very little snow last winter. I would be very grateful: email ann@lesage.org.uk.

You will have spotted the photo in my News page of 15 May showing a striking family art work in the brook above Ibbotson Wheel Dam. A great reminder of special times here in the valley during lockdown time. Other captured memories please!

Ann le Sage

Shepherd Wheel

Unsurprisingly, there's little to report about the Wheel with lockdown closing it. People are keeping an eye on the site regarding vandalism and its general state. The Wheel is unlikely to re-open until September, after Sheffield Industrial Museums Trust has its Kelham and Abbeydale sites operational again. Quite how access to Shepherd Wheel will be organised remains to be seen.

Maggie Marsh

Secretary:
Glynis Jones
25 Endcliffe Rise Road
S11 8RU

Tel 2668332
secretary@fopv.org.uk

Annual Membership:

Single: £10
Family: £15
Concession: £5

Membership forms
available from
David Young
(tel. 2307909)
or on our website

The Committee:

Ann le Sage
Chair
David Young
Treasurer
Glynis Jones
Secretary / newsletter
Dave Clegg
Conservation work days
Les Greenwood
Mike Halliwell
Website / membership
Glyn Mansell
Bingham Park
Maggie Marsh
Shepherd Wheel open days
Chris Nicholson
Walks
Flora Owen
Talks

Bingham Park

The Porter Valley is on my doorstep and with our children and now grandchildren we have walked, cycled and enjoyed all this valley has to offer. Bingham Park away from the main cycle trail and Shepherd Wheel has a lot of hidden gems. Friends of Porter Valley have produced a leaflet "50+ things to do in a walk around Bingham Park". With the leaflet in hand I completed some of the tasks, apart from hopping across the bowling green no longer used by bowlers I decided to leave that to my grandchildren. During this period of lockdown it was interesting to discover hidden paths and really look at the magnificent trees in the park. The park has also been a haven for families and young people. The pay-to-play tennis courts are well used and the resurfaced old tennis court has been enjoyed by young children cycling and later in the day by skate boarders. Linda and Zoe, members of Bingham Park Community Group (BPCG), had arranged for children's activities in the Bowling Pavilion but it had to be cancelled due to the [lockdown](#).

FoPV working groups were unable to work in the parks, and park staff have been really busy maintaining the parks for our enjoyment. The number of people in the parks especially with fine weather has created a major problem with an increase of litter. Additional litter bins have been provided but if full people dump stuff at the side of the bin. A lot of litter (plastic and glass bottles, crisp, sweet bags and quite a lot more unpleasant rubbish), never reaches the bins. Some is from young people but I have seen adults dump stuff, including dog waste, next to overflowing bins. Members of BPCG and other people have collected litter. A black bag with a number of glass bottles (some smashed up) is quite heavy. So please spread the word: enjoy Bingham Park and take your litter home.

Glyn Mansell

Six months in a weird world: Late last December my wife, Pauline and I set off to London to celebrate my birthday and to go on to Bath for the Christmas celebrations. Pauline developed a cough and was bit feverish and we ended up at A&E in Christmas Eve. A chest infection was diagnosed and antibiotics prescribed. By Christmas Day I began to exhibit similar symptoms and so for six days we steered around our family to try to avoid infecting them.

When we were able, we drove home to spend the next fortnight recovering from what was probably a virus. Was it just one of those winter ones or something more sinister? As we improved we began to consider our up-coming trip to Singapore and Malaysia in February. We began to absorb the news about Covid and wondered about the wisdom of travelling. After taking advice from a Singapore resident we finally decided to go. We had a great time and were impressed by all the temperature checks at airports etc. There were very few tourists so we had the places to ourselves most of the time. On our return home we were surprised that no such checks were undertaken at Manchester but were glad that our taxi driver was there to greet us! Had we tried to leave three days later from Penang we would have been stuck there as all flights were cancelled due to a severe outbreak caused by a mass gathering of pilgrims to a local shrine. On our return in mid-March we self isolated, and soon afterwards the UK went into the Lockdown.

As regards FoPV financial affairs, the worst aspect was the cancellation of the duck race which usually nets c.£10k for the Forge Dam fund. Recently we have had a number of generous donations for which we are most grateful. Despite the lockdown I have been able to bank cheques and so my work has been reasonably unhindered. Our negotiations with the Heritage Lottery Fund are currently in abeyance as regards raising funds for the Forge Dam Project. We have been able to have a Zoom conference of the Management Committee for Shepherd Wheel.

All in all it has been quite the weirdest six months in my life, but I hope it is now improving and that our members have been able to get through it without too many problems.

David Young