

Porter Valley News



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

Issue 112



January 2024

Sheffield Museums: Starting with a Platypus

A talk by Kirstie Hamilton
Wednesday 7th February
7:30 - 9:30pm
Bents Green Methodist Church
Ringinglow Road



Before the talk we will have our Open Meeting.
After the talk, tea and biscuits, and a chance to chat with the committee
and other members.

Another Anniversary

Regular readers will recall that this year, as well as it being 30 years since the inception of FoPV, marks a more sombre anniversary – 80 years since the crash of USAF plane, Mi Amigo, in Endcliffe Park, with the loss of all crew members.

Scheduled work on replacing the memorial's fencing began in mid-December, with improvements to the steps planned for this month (and hopefully completed by the time you read this).

Noticeboards have been installed for information from Tony Foulds, whose childhood reminiscences, shared with locally based but nationally renowned broadcaster Dan Walker, did so much to bring the story of Mi Amigo to a national and international audience. Thanks are due to all funders, including the RAF, the Local Area Committee, and to the Council's Parks and Countryside Directorate for funding the noticeboards.

Ann Le Sage

Inside this issue:

Christmas events	2
Flora Owen	3
Ducks ready to race	3
Duck race volunteers needed	3
December walk	4
Website update	4
Contact details	4
Membership details	4
Committee members	4
Activities	4



Bingham Park

The second Basketball Court (cost £21,642) is proving to be a success with young people. The surface is adequate for playing but not at the same standard as the basketball/netball court. When extra funds have been raised, we plan to re-surface.

Picnic tables: During the summer, young people with laptops used the tables for exam revision.

On a less happy note, I was upset when someone destroyed one of the tables using some flammable liquid. The fire service had to attend. Friends of the Porter Valley have now replaced the burned table.

Glyn Mansell

Christmas Events at Fulwood Old Chapel and Forge Dam Café



FoPV had a busy time in November and December.

In previous years we have sold cards, calendars, wreath kits, knitted goods and crafts from two trestle tables outside the garages at Forge Dam. Last year was bone-chillingly cold, wet and miserable so we looked for an alternative... Fulwood Old Chapel.



On a bright, sunny, but cold day we set up the usual wares but also refreshments, home baking, plenty of crafts and some second-hand books. People arrived even before we had set up, many lingered over mince pies and mulled wine and, wreaths were collected and sold, along with elegant sprays of seasonal foliage. At the end of the day we had raised £1210 towards the playground appeal, had some very satisfied customers and some happy volunteers. It was a real team effort, something of an experiment but we have already provisionally booked for next year!

As well as the daytime event at Fulwood Old Chapel, we entertained people at two evening wreath making workshops, one at the Chapel and one at Forge Dam Café.



Thanks are due to everyone who made these events possible. First our thanks go to those who helped on the night, and to Forge Dam Café and Fulwood Old Chapel, but also to the collectors of foliage from gardens and allotments, the folk who produced the cards and calendars, the knitters and the wreath makers. Especial thanks to John and Jenny Gittins for letting us invade their home and litter it with wire, scissors and types of foliage too numerous to describe!

We have (at the time of writing) a few calendars left, now reduced to half price (£5) and available at all good cafés in the Porter Valley!

A successful Christmas as we approach our 30th Anniversary. Hilary White & Ann le Sage



Flora Owen

A dear friend to many of us and an early and active supporter of FoPV, Flora died on November 30 2023. A key player in our activities, a winning personality, always interested in nature and the history of the area, Flora was keen to learn more about and improve the valley. She was a great organiser and more adept than any of us at persuading people to help. Her life beyond FoPV was full: travel, art, bird watching, meeting new people and making new friends.

Eight years ago, Flora had to adapt to wheelchair living when surgery for spinal problems resulted in paraplegia. However, her inherent vitality and curiosity remained undimmed with a diary of new activities, visits from friends, trips out and training her teams of care assistants. Always keen to hear what the Friends were doing, Flora would draw on her store of memories and contacts to help us.

She is much missed.

Ann le Sage



Ducks preened, cleaned and ready to race



We know it's only January but we're already planning for the Easter Monday duck race in Endcliffe

Park on April 1st. In fact, preparation started in November/December with the ducks who were fished out of the water and captured in nets at the end of last year's race. These (all 2,500 of them) have to be squeezed (gently), because they take in water, then dried, their numbers checked and ducks 'lost in action' replaced.

Fortunately, a dedicated band of 12 FoPV volunteers were on hand to help with this. Their willingness to take on tasks like this is what makes the annual duck race possible—many thanks.

Glynis Jones

Duck race volunteers wanted!

We need people to act as river marshals along the course, duck sellers, staffing the FoPV stalls, the plant stall and the all-important setting up/taking down teams. You don't have to commit to a full day, we work shift systems. There is a job to suit everyone and new volunteers are especially welcome. On the job training provided!

Sellers: We're also looking for volunteers who are willing to use a card reader at the duck race (when selling ducks or items from the FoPV stall). All you need is a mobile 'smart' phone - we will provide a card reader and a short practice session on how to use the reader.

First Aiders: Or would you like to wear one of these smart red jackets at the race? We are looking for additional first aiders to help at the duck race. Are you an active first aider or willing to learn on a one-day emergency first aid course? Injuries and incidents recorded in the last five years include a cut finger and a lost (only very temporarily) child. But we like to be prepared,

If you would like to be involved in any of these capacities, or want to find out more, please contact Hilary in the first instance on white.hilary51@gmail.com

Hilary White, Linda Bayley and Rob Peck



Secretary:
Glynis Jones
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Tel 2668332
secretary@fopv.org.uk

Annual Membership:

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

For membership forms
and online application
visit our website.

STOP PRESS

The total takings for all
FoPV activities over the
festive season is
estimated to be c.£6000.

Our chairperson will send
a members update once
the exact amount raised
for the Forge Dam play-
ground project is known .

The Committee:

Ann le Sage
Chair / talks
Lyndon Porter
Treasurer / walks
Glynis Jones
Secretary / newsletter
Les Greenwood
Newsletter
Mike Halliwell
Website / membership
Glyn Mansell
FD playground project
Rob Peck
Safety officer
David Young
Vice chair

December's FoPV Walk: On December 2nd, Claire Watts led a group of members round the millpond in freezing temperatures to enable a discussion of further improvements needed in 2024. Retreating to the warmth of the Café, Claire responded to queries and shared the following information:

Bridlepath – Contractor appointed to install a new access control feature where the path meets Quiet Lane. Installation hopefully March 2024.

Millrace – Lightmain commissioned to install a trash screen to prevent floating debris damaging the penstock. Installation dependent on weather conditions, again, hopefully, Spring 2024. It will be necessary to lower the water level in the dam to enable safe access.

Survey – To coincide with the above, a condition survey is planned as part of the investigation to resolve the leaking spillway sluice.

Silt-trap – Discussions ongoing with preferred contractor to work out an affordable method of regular emptying.

Ann le Sage



There has been a number of upgrades to the website since 2012, mainly due to various software changes or security requirements. There has also been a shift in user behaviour, in that today the majority of views are done on a mobile device such as a smartphone or tablet rather than on a desktop computer. This has meant the site has had to be designed to be easy to use on those devices.

The site has also grown over recent years with the introduction of features like events, blog pages and an increase in the number of items we offer in the web shop, particularly leading up to Christmas. The blogs have proved very popular and by the time you read this we will have over 125 blogs about our activities including the duck race, project updates and work mornings. With so much information it can be difficult to find specific items or to remember where you may have read something in one of the blogs. So our latest upgrade has been to include a search bar at the top, like in the picture above, to help you locate that long lost item or just to see how many items, events or articles there are for those upcoming ducks. I hope it helps.

Mike Halliwell

Activities for February to April

Any changes in the following details will be available on the website

When and Where	What and When
Saturday 3 rd February, 10am	Walk tbc
Wednesday 7 th February, 7.30pm Bents Green Methodist Church Hall	Sheffield Museums: Starting with a Platypus Open Meeting and talk by Kirstie Hamilton
Thursday 8 th February, 9.45am	Conservation work morning
Tuesday 27 th February, 9.45am	Conservation work morning
Saturday 2 nd March, 10am	Walk tbc
Thursday 14 th March, 9.45am	Conservation work morning
Tuesday 26 th March, 9.45am	Conservation work morning
Monday 1 st April, 11am - 3.30pm	Easter Monday Duck Race (games, stalls, dog agility etc.) Duck race starts at 2pm (duck sales from 11am)
Thursday 11 th April, 9.45am	Conservation work morning
Tuesday 23 rd April, 9.45am	Conservation work morning

Conservation work mornings: for details, please contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or Lyndon Porter lyndon@the-porters.me.uk or visit our website FOPV.org.uk

Walks: These are ticket events – for details and registration, please visit our website walks page. Registration opens two weeks before the walk.