

Porter Valley News



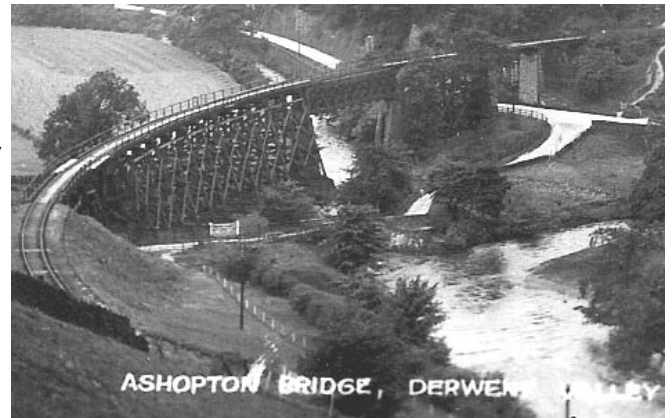
The newsletter of Friends of the Porter Valley - Registered Charity No. 1069865

Issue 96

January 2020

Railways for the Reservoirs of Derwent and Howden

A talk by Ted Hancock
Wednesday 5th 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.

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Bingham Park

Sheffield United Football Club Community Foundation (SUFC-C.F.) arranged two free community football sessions for young people aged 12-16 years



on the AstroTurf at Bingham Park on Tuesday 29 October and Thursday 31 October 1pm to 3pm. The community foundation provided the equipment and support from enthusiastic football coaches and the

young people enjoyed the sessions. SUFC-CF are arranging visits to High Storrs and Silverdale schools and also working with Bingham Park Community Group (BPCG) to provide other activities in 2020.

Kerensa Hobbs and other BPCG members have submitted a funding bid to Pocket Parks (The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) which if successful will be used to provide a combined Netball and Basketball court on one of the redundant tennis courts.

Glyn Mansell



Privet ready for chipping in Bluebell Wood

Conservation Volunteers Plan the Future

During a recent work morning towards the end of 2019, Chris Nicholson and I took a stroll along the valley with Andy Phillips, Council Parks Manager and John Gilpin, Council Tree Manager. The purpose was to review activities and plan for 2020. As you probably know we are moving forward rapidly with our plans for the desilting of Forge Dam and so we started in the area

around Forge Dam. Conservation volunteers have been working for some time to improve the environment around Forge Dam as part of the project. And so we looked at the progress of recent work in the vicinity. Currently we are clearing the bank between the dam and Festival Woodland to restore the view previously enjoyed from the footpath above the dam. Old photographs show that there was a clear view across the dam from the benches on the path running along Festival Woodland. Holly and other unmanaged growth have obscured the view in recent times.

Further along the valley a short walk beyond Wiremill Dam we came to Bluebell Wood. We have already carried out one work morning here recently. This used to be the site of a large number of allotments now abandoned. They had privet hedges surrounding them which have since grown way out of control. You can see from the photograph the piles of privet we cut down ready for the chipper. Lots more work to do here. You can imagine what would happen if you didn't cut your hedge for 60 years. Well that's what has happened here!



Moving on down the valley we found ourselves at

Shepherd Wheel. The bank between the dam and the river is seriously overgrown. This is another opportunity for work in the near future. The dam and its banks need regular maintenance. Onwards and downriver we went towards the area adjacent to the Lodge near the Rustlings Road mini roundabout. Here we examined a very large thicket of laurel, rhododendrons, various shrubs and who knows what in the centre. We will be tackling this in the coming year to reduce it to sensible proportions. During earnest discussions on these projects for 2020 we were watched by a friendly heron. Our endeavours are aimed at improving habitat for creatures such as this.



Shepherd Wheel bank in a tangle and needing work

There are many other opportunities for work by our willing conservation volunteers. Please join us on our work mornings. Full details are given on the FoPV web site.

Dave Clegg

New Membership System

As well as being in charge of all things online I am also the FoPV membership secretary! A role that was supposed to be temporary just over two years ago so I'm still trying to work out what happened there. Many of you will already be aware that in December we introduced an automated membership system which introduces some new features and benefits for members. For example, with your email address you can now log into the member's pages and also view your details held in our database.

You can also make changes to those details if needed. Also, for the first time in our 25 years you will receive a much requested Membership Card, as seen here for yours truly, which you can print out at home and use when attending our meetings or walks etc. You can even add your photo to it if you wish and it will also provide a reminder of when your membership expires or renews, although unless you are paying by Standing Order the new system will automatically remind you a month before.

It does however rely on us having an accurate and up to date email address for each member. Those of you who have provided us with an email address will already be aware of some of these changes as you will already have access to its features. If we don't have an email for you then you should have received a separate letter with this newsletter. It's early days and there may be the odd glitch but hopefully you will begin to see the benefits over the next few months.



Mike Halliwell

The Naming of Shepherd[’s] Wheel

After being “Porter Wheel” in the Hallamshire Rentals for some 200 years our site was renamed in mid-18th century. Clearly, there had to be good reasons. But how and why did Edward Shepherd, one tenant of many, succeed in bequeathing *his* name? Firstly, of the twenty water-powered sites on the river, seven were new-built around 1750. And six of those were within a mile or so, up- and down-stream, of Porter Wheel. This was very different from when the latter was the only wheel above Hunter’s Bar. Secondly, Shepherd first appeared in the Rentals in 1749; so he took up his tenancy at a period of great change. And he held it for more than 40 years; enough, it could be argued, to ensure the notion of permanence.

However, much detail is also available for Shepherd’s major works at the site mid-tenancy. The first step was to increase the capacity of the dam. In November 1768 William Fairbank, surveyor, priced the removal of 1339 cubic yards of earth (c.1000 cu m) significantly “*at Edw^d Shepherd’s Wheel*”. Notes refer to the removal of “The Island” (probably a build-up of silt) and digging “On the North Side of the present Damm”. Months later Fairbank recorded the removal of a further 420 cubic yards. A subsequent plan shows the total surface area to be approximately half an acre. The additional water was needed to provide power for a proposed extended wheel-house with six new “trows” (Sheffield-speak for grind-stone troughs), bringing the ensemble to sixteen. Stonework for the building is recorded in late 1769.

Edward Shepherd operated his Wheel for more than four decades and arguably made the most significant changes in its long history. Its naming after him does seem fully justified.

Neville Flavell

Forge Dam Heritage and Wildlife Improvement Project

We need to appoint a specialist consultant to determine the precise amount of silt that must be extracted from the pond and where this can be disposed of within the confines of “waste management regulations”, for which we hope to can get a grant to cover for the costs. We plan to submit the bid in late spring, with a decision by late summer, a period covered by bird nesting protection, and hope that action will start in winter 2020. Our Management Committee has been boosted by two new members from the City Council, who have expertise on waste management and funding bid preparation. I am pleased to advise that the money raised so far is £255,000 and this will clearly demonstrate the seriousness of our intent for Forge Dam when the bid to Heritage Lottery Fund is submitted.

David Young

New arrivals in “The Village”

In the last few years Fulwood “village” managed to lose among others a thriving off-license and a well used Post Office. The Newsagents came to the rescue, incorporating a minute version of each in the shop. Five months ago the newsagent closed down!! Our efficient Co-Op now sells papers and off-license goods and the Hardware shop sells stamps. The long-established butchers shop also fell victim to the disappearing sickness in 2018.

But now the Community has welcomed two new arrivals – the Coffee House (of which more in the next issue) and – wonder of wonders – a PUB! The Fulwood Ale Club opened in the former premises of Bowyers Butchers (a thriving branch of which exist at Lodge Moor) on December 14th at 12.13pm – I know the time as I was in a queue of one waiting outside. It is the smaller sibling of the Ecclesall Ale Club near Berkeley Precinct. James and father Rob, the owners, didn’t meet with any licensing difficulties, putting an end to long-standing rumours of covenants banning licensed premises in the parish of Fulwood. (They did discover however that you can’t keep more than two horses in your back garden or turn your house into a tannery – which scuppers my next DIY project!)

The Pub, very small but perfectly formed, is supplied with beer from the Brew Foundation, James’ and Rob’s brewery in Winkle in the Peak District on the way to Congleton. There are 4 ‘Craft Beers and 4 ‘Real Ale’ (distinction explained for a small donation to FoPV), some of which are guests from other breweries. ‘In house’ lager is a permanent fixture and there is usually something dark and stouty. There is a small outside seating area (not much used at present) which is to be enlarged for the summer. Patronage has so far vastly exceeded expectations for which the novelty value and Christmas holidays are probably responsible but a superb cosy atmosphere and pleasant staff will hopefully enable the place to thrive in the future. Opening hours are 12 noon to 11:00pm every day. Come along and enjoy a novel experience – for Fulwood.

Les Greenwood

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

Duck Knitting The intrepid knitters will be picking up their needles and seeking yarn very soon – keep an eye on the website for more details or come to the Open meeting to pick up details if you wish to join the team.

Ann Granville

Endcliffe Park A cold but sunny afternoon in December, Tabitha almost 3 years old runs through the fallen leaves in bright red wellies, hides behind the big trees. Off to feed the ducks (duck food from the café) a Coot fights its way through the ducks for a share of the food. Egg sandwiches for Tabitha sitting on a park bench. Children's Playground next, swings, the climbing frame and slides. Ice-cream from the café of course even in December. As we walk towards the park gates a little voice, "will you carry me Granddad?"

Glyn Mansell

Excellent results from the Forge Dam Christmas Fair We raised just short of £2000 from donations, wreath making, sales of cakes and hot drink, Christmas cards and 2020 calendars and much else besides. Piercingly cold though it was, this time we all got away safely without suffering black ice suddenly descending on the activities! As usual it was a fun event and if you want evidence go back and see the 19 December Sheffield Telegraph spread on pages 28 and 29. Or look at <https://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/friends-fundraising-days-dam-work-set-start-1343766> for David Bocking's lovely write up and photos. For those of you who have not yet looked at your 2020 Calendar December page have a peek ahead and enjoy Peter Kennett's photo of a happy wreath maker at last year's Fair. There are a few calendars left if anyone wants one!

Ann le Sage

Activities for January to May

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

When and Where	What and Who
Tuesday 28th January, 10am Forge Dam Café	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or fopv.org.uk for details
Saturday 1 st February, 10am General Cemetery entrance, Cemetery Ave.	<i>The Changing Face of the Lower Valley</i> A walk led by Chris Bullivant
Wednesday 5 th February, 7:30pm Bents Green Methodist Church Hall	<i>Railways for the reservoirs of Derwent and Howden</i> Open meeting and talk by Ted Hancock
Thursday 13 th February, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com for or fopv.org.uk details
Tuesday 25 th February, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or fopv.org.uk for details
Saturday 7 th March, 10:30am Clark Farm, Hangram Lane	<i>Farming in the Porter Valley</i> A walk
Thursday 12 th March, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or fopv.org.uk for details
Tuesday 24 th March, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or fopv.org.uk for details
Thursday 9 th April, 10am Endcliffe Park Café	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or fopv.org.uk for details
13 th April 10am – 4pm Endcliffe Park	<i>Great Easter Duck Race</i> Easter bonnet parade, games, stalls, dog agility etc. Duck race starts at 2pm (duck sales from 10am)
Tuesday 28 th April, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or fopv.org.uk for details
Saturday 2 nd May, 4:30 am Wire Mill Dam car park	<i>Dawn chorus</i> A walk led by Chris Nicholson
Wednesday 6 th May, 7:30pm Bents Green Methodist Church Hall	<i>The Underground Porter: Hunter's Bar to Train Station</i> Open meeting and talk by Patrick Dickinson

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