

# Porter Valley News



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

Issue 91

October 2018

## The Most Perfect Thing: why birds' eggs are so wonderful

A talk by Prof. Tim Birkhead

Wednesday 6th February

7:30 - 9:30pm

Bents Green Methodist Church

Ringinglow Road



Guillemot  
egg

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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## Forge Dam News



I am delighted to announce that Planning Permission has been GRANTED, valid for three years. There are some conditions to the permission which include:

- Approval of movements of storage of materials and vehicles
- Management of public access and traffic
- Method statements for construction methods, waste management and pollution prevention
- Details of the training wall design
- Consultations with SCC Ecology Unit
- Submission of a Remediation Strategy Report relating to the silt removal.

These conditions are what we were expecting, given that these are things that need to be addressed during the detailed design work. We now have all the permissions in place to enable us to apply to potential donors for the outstanding monies.

David Young

## Registering Valley Observations and Changes



heron

At a recent committee meeting the suggestion was made for a record to be kept of the wildlife and changes which are witnessed in the valley throughout the year. We undoubtedly have many knowledgeable and highly proficient members, (see the superb photographs recently mounted on the website) who walk and observe the changes occurring over the year. We are setting up a recording system so that members can register their observations, for example the first swallow, the last swift, interesting fungi, butterfly, moth, mole activity, first flowering of the wood anemone, or even the sighting of a water vole! All observations which you think are worth recording or which others may find of interest can be sent to the new email address\* we have set up for this purpose. The address is [registry@fopv.org.uk](mailto:registry@fopv.org.uk) and summaries of these observations will be circulated in our regular Newsletters. It is suggested that we have an initial trial period to see what use is made of the site. It may develop



long tailed tit

such that records could be fed directly onto our website. So what have you seen and would like to share with FoPV members?

\*Or could be passed on by telephone/snail mail to any committee member.

*Chris Nicholson*

## Strangers at Wire Mill

Passing Wire Mill Dam towards the end of a run on November 9<sup>th</sup> I noticed a pair of unknown ducks. I returned with a camera and took several pictures. The male was 50% bigger than a Mallard and appears black from a distance but with brilliant iridescent dark green back from above. The female was much paler, chestnut and tan with almost white wing patches. I consulted bird expert, Chris, who trawled through books and websites – no luck. Another expert, Nigel, was unable to help.

Five days later, after the same run on the same route the same ducks were being fed by an Irishman, as one of his regular pastimes. He said he'd been told the previous day by an Asian lady that they were common in her area of north east India, near the Chinese border. I Googled 'Indian Ducks' and Bingo! Black East India ducks. I consulted Chris because surely they can't have been blown so far by unseasonal easterlies? Alas, no! Pictures of them on various poultry websites suggest that they have absconded from a local poultry farm. Is there no romance left in the world?

*Les Greenwood*

PS on 28<sup>th</sup> December they were still there, but difficult to spot against a dark background. Other visiting ducks this winter include Goosanders (2 male and 1 female) seen on Wire Mill Dam. These are "sawbill" ducks, which eat fish, using the serrated edges of their bills to grip their prey.

*Ros Hancock*



*Erecting squeeze stile at Waggy's Field 1998*

## 2019: FoPV is 25 years old this year

A handful of regular park users came together in 1994 to form a recognizable Friends group to support the green space running along the valley of the Porter Brook. And the rest is history. A quarter of a century further on the membership now stands at over 600 with a wider network of Facebook and Twitter users, a website, and many regular activities to entice people to visit this beautiful area and play an active part in improving the amenities and access and conservation of the unique mosaic of habitats here. A year to celebrate achievements!

*Ann le Sage*

## Endcliffe Park Flying Fortress Memorial Service



Another important milestone is coming up in 2019: on 22 February 1944, 75 years ago, 10 American airmen sacrificed their lives to avoid landing their plane on the Endcliffe green where children were playing...by choosing to crash in the Endcliffe woodland. The annual ceremony will be very significant this year so the memorial has now been cleaned and our conservation volunteers will be working with Council and Amey staff on 22 January to lay fresh hoggin on the access path. Anyone wishing to join in this effort is very welcome to do so: extra strong arms will make light work! We meet at 10am beside the Memorial. Look out for more coverage of the developing commemoration plans and take the time to visit this unique site.

*Ann le Sage*

## Bingham Park

The path from Rustlings Road in to Bingham Park is always very busy with people walking, jogging, walking dogs and cyclists, families with children on wobbly bikes and visitors to Shepherd Wheel. The Park area above with the Bowling Green has new fencing installed, the Pay to Play Tennis Courts were renovated in 2018 with support from Bingham Community Group (BPCG), Friends of Porter Valley and Sheffield Parks Department. A community fun day on Sunday October 21 was held in the Bowling Pavilion and on the upper bowling green. This was well supported with games for children, and a display with ideas for the future development of the 3 lower activity areas. The BPCG has examined options from Lightmains for three Multi Use Games areas: netball, football and basketball. Area 1 has been resurfaced for children to play games, scooter and cycling. The AstroTurf area is to be maintained. The next stage in improvements requires communication with Greystones Community and major fundraising. In 2019/20 I would welcome help from volunteers to achieve these aims.

*Glyn Mansell (BPCG committee)*

## Our 2018 Christmas Fair...

...survived freezing rain and raised over £1500 with a further £600 from sales and donations before and after the day. So, over £2100 went towards the restoration of the Forge Dam area. After a "beast from the east" experience at the Easter duck race, we thought the Christmas Fair might enjoy more clement weather, but oh no...amber warnings for freezing rain in the afternoon meant an early and hurried closure with rather smaller numbers of stalls and visitors than usual, but the sturdy FoPV volunteers donned their best Arctic clothing and as usual the community spirit carried us through. Homemade cakes, the wreath making and bright knitted goods were the stars, the rousing strains of the Veres' vintage organ cheered everyone up, and the cash rattled in. To raise over £2100 in these circumstances was extraordinary! Well done all doughty organisers and the secret circles of bakers and knitters who bore their offerings triumphantly to the Forge Dam on the day. And well done all the sellers active before the day and then on the following relatively warm Sunday morning! Packing up and getting home was exciting for many: Fulwood and Lodge Moor acquired invisible skating rinks from mid-day while the valley bottom was not hit till around 2pm so impromptu skiing backwards on sloping drives marked the return home for some.



*Ann le Sage*

So what does the experience tell us for the duck race on Easter Monday in Endcliffe Park!?



Secretary:  
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#### 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*  
Keith Smith

## Shepherd Wheel

Whatever the weather throws at us, the Wheel remains as popular as ever with hardy souls walking past. The second rotten and vandalised shutter has been replaced. There have been no breakdowns in machinery (I've dared to say it) and the knitted Christmas figures were craftily hidden by the engineers to delight young and old eyes alike in spotting them.

*Maggie Marsh*

## Desperately seeking Reuben

Many thanks to all those who took part in the 'Name this Lady Elf' competition at the 15<sup>th</sup> December Fair. The successful choice was 'Nancy' – but the successful chooser cannot be contacted because the mobile phone number that Reuben (the winner) left is incomplete. So, if you are Reuben, or you know him, please contact 0114 2630776 so that Nancy can go to her forever home. If Reuben is unable to claim her – look for her at our next event.

*Ann Greenwood*

## Knitters alert!

It's never too soon to think of knitting ducks. Fill in those dreary winter days with brightly coloured yarn and let your imagination run free! Patterns available from the usual sources.

*Ann Granville*

## Activities for January to May

Any changes in the following details due to inclement weather will be available on the web-site, Radio Sheffield or through the committee

When and Where	What and Who
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> February, 10am Hunter's Bar	"Sharrow Vale Tour" A walk led by Chris Bullivant
Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> February, 7.30pm Bents Green Church Hall	"The most perfect thing: why birds' eggs are so wonderful" Open meeting and talk by Professor Tim Birkhead
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> February, 10am Endcliffe Park Café	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg <a href="mailto:orielclegg@aol.com">orielclegg@aol.com</a> or <a href="http://fopv.org.uk">fopv.org.uk</a> for details
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> February, 10am Porter Clough car park	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg <a href="mailto:orielclegg@aol.com">orielclegg@aol.com</a> or <a href="http://fopv.org.uk">fopv.org.uk</a> for details
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March, 10.30am Hangram Lane Farm	"Farming in the Porter Valley" A walk led by farmer Andrew Clark
Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> March, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg <a href="mailto:orielclegg@aol.com">orielclegg@aol.com</a> or <a href="http://fopv.org.uk">fopv.org.uk</a> for details
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Saturday 6 <sup>th</sup> April	Walk tba
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> April, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg <a href="mailto:orielclegg@aol.com">orielclegg@aol.com</a> or <a href="http://fopv.org.uk">fopv.org.uk</a> for details
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April, 10am-4pm Endcliffe Park	Great Easter Duck Race Easter bonnet parade, activities, stalls, duck sales etc. Duck race starts at 2pm
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April, 10am	Conservation work morning. Contact Dave Clegg <a href="mailto:orielclegg@aol.com">orielclegg@aol.com</a> or <a href="http://fopv.org.uk">fopv.org.uk</a> for details
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May, 7.30pm Bents Green Church Hall	"Early English Silversmiths" Open evening and talk by Emma Paragreen
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup> May, 4.30am Wire Mill Dam car park	"Dawn Chorus" A walk led by Chris Nicholson