Friends of Jesmond Dene Newsletter

Spring 2016 **Number 77**

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Editorial

Spring again! ...and we hope that everyone is enjoying the 'greenness' of Jesmond Dene. It is good news that the Dene has been awarded Green Flag once more. We hope that you enjoy reading this latest edition of the Friends of Jesmond Dene Newsletter. Remember that the A.G.M. will be held at 14.00 hrs on May 8th at the Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene. All FOJD are very welcome.

Contents Inside: - Page number

AGM	2
Administration and Membership Information	2
Adopt a Plot Scheme	3
Big Garden Birdwatch	3
Friends of Jesmond Dene Committee open meeting	4
Friends of Jesmond Dene Film and Video Club	5
Jesmond Community Festival	5
Frank West Rich - Architect to Lord Armstrong	6
Green Flag Award	7
Jesmond Dene Archives	8
Memories of Jesmond Dene	9
Pets Corner developments	10
Princes Regeneration Trust and Banqueting Hall	10
Rangers Update	12
Volunteer Rangers Winter Tasks	13
Forthcoming Events	15

Newsletter Editorial Team

Words from the Chairman

The committee members of the Friends of Jesmond Dene and the Volunteer Rangers thank all of you who have made donations via annual subscriptions, gifts and bequests to the FOJD for the conservation and upkeep of the Dene.

Banqueting Hall – Please see page 9 for some positive developments.

Vacancies – currently there are three places open for new committee members. If any of the FOJD feel that they can give up some spare time and volunteer to join us, please get in touch, we would be delighted to hear from you. (See page 4). clive@kelso.demon.co.uk.

Clive Gerrard Chair FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Sunday 8th May at 14:00hrs, in the Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene. All FOJD are welcome. Following the success of last year's photo competition there will be another photographic opportunity this year. ***There are two separate categories for photographers aged 16 and under, and for adults. The closing date for entries is 24th April 2016***. For further details see posters in Jesmond Library and Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene or www.jesmonddene.org.uk. Neil Atkinson will judge the competition and has offered a 'street safari' photography workshop as the first prize in each category. (Under 16's must be accompanied by an adult). Many thanks to Neil for his participation.

At the AGM:-
Officers to be confirmed.
Financial accounts to be made available
Projects update
Date and time of next AGM meeting to be arranged.

The FOJD will hold an Open Day for members of the General Public on the 7th May, 10.00am – 15.00 and on the morning of 8th May. Our aims of the open day are to keep the interest of all current FOJD but, also to attract new members. We will include items from the archive collection, information about the FOJD, the Adopt-a-Plot- scheme, and all the activities/opportunities in which FOJD and Volunteers can take part, including the FOJD film group. (See page 5). The display drew a very favourable response from the public last year.

Administering the FOJD

- The Newsletter is available online and the Friends' website is the primary news source for both members and the general public. We will also be sending the newsletter to all FOJD who have given us their email address. Printed copies of newsletters are still available for collection at the Ouseburn Parks' Visitor Centre.

- FOJD has a presence on Facebook. Please join the group to share thoughts and/or photographs of the Dene. Please like our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofJesmondDene and/or join our Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/757773184342507/, to find out about future events in the Dene.

- If you have concerns or suggestions, please contact us using the form on the website at http://www.jesmonddene.org.uk/?page_id=2 or write to us at Friends of Jesmond Dene - Newsletter Feedback C/O Ouseburn Parks' Visitor Centre, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle NE7 7BQ.

- Membership subscriptions are set at a flat rate of £5 p.a. for households. This is paid by standing order. Our Membership Secretary is available if you need help or advice on how to join - contact **Keith Pringle,** FOJD at the address on the last page of this newsletter. Details you will need to set up the standing order are the bank details for the Friends bank - The Sort Code / Account Number you will need are **30 93 55 / 01464356**. Would you also please ask them to assign a payment reference of your own full name (forename and surname) so that we can correctly identify your payment.

Adopt-A-Plot Scheme

Please remember that the FOJD have implemented this type of volunteer contribution into Jesmond Dene, alongside the regular volunteer sessions. Families or individuals, who are unable to attend the supervised volunteer sessions can still help look after a small piece of the Dene, at a time to suit them. For example, collecting litter from the Old Mill or, perhaps keeping a particular flight of steps free of leaves and debris, or even looking after a flower bed. Anyone wanting to find out more please contact Sarah on 0191 2650564 or email sarah.capes@newcastle.gov.uk

2016 RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

To celebrate the 2016 RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, three public bird walks took place in Jesmond Dene on Saturday 30th January. In total, 21 species were seen or heard, fifteen on each of the first two walks and just seven on the third. This makes sense as birds are busy refuelling in the morning, but can then be less active just after lunch.

The routes of all the walks were the same. Starting from the Visitor Centre, we took the path across the north end of Coleman's Field to the Nature Area where volunteers from the RSPB Local Group were on hand to point out and identify the birds at the feeding station. Here we saw four species of tit including, on the first walk, a flock of five Long-tailed Tits, as well as Chaffinches and Goldfinches.

The stars of this location though were two Siskins. These beautiful little finches breed and mostly live in the higher woods in the region, in areas like the Simonside Hills and Keilder Forest. Every few years though, if food gets short in the forests in winter, they migrate down to suburban gardens and parks and feed there, often appearing regularly for several weeks.

Siskin on feeder

Walking along the river as far as Fisherman's Lodge, we saw: - Mallards, Grey Wagtails, and Moorhens and for two of the three walks, a Kingfisher. Often, all we see of a Kingfisher is a quick electric blue flash as it flies along the river, but for these walks, the birds were perched long enough for everyone to see them. So many people who I speak to have been walking through the Dene for years and yet have never seen a Kingfisher.

Surprisingly, we did not hear Great Spotted Woodpeckers drumming, but to make up for that, one walk saw a Nuthatch and another walk, a Treecreeper. Both these tree-climbing birds are resident in the Dene.

As well as the usual Carrion Crow, Magpies and Jackdaws, one walk was lucky enough to see a Jay, a spectacular bird but a secretive one that never hangs around and allows good views. They are always on the move. Another bird sighted fleetingly was a Sparrowhawk that soared over but quickly disappeared behind trees.

Overall a set of very successful bird walks in my opinion.

Mike Cook FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

FRIENDS OF JESMOND DENE COMMITTEE OPEN MEETING

The committee exists to help to preserve the Dene and enhance its amenities wherever possible. Many people use and value the area, walking, jogging, relaxing and appreciating such a rural and tranquil place in the middle of a city.

As friends, you know that funds are obtained from an annual subscription of £5 per person (or family) augmented by donations and bequests. This money is used in a variety of ways, such as new tree planting, working on the archive collection, tools, publicity and much more.

The committee members are anxious to have the views of all Park users on projects that they would like to see undertaken and their comments on how they think the area can be maintained and improved. At present ideas range from more tree planting to renovating one of the ponds that is in disrepair.

To facilitate this, the next committee meeting will be held on Thursday April 21st at 2 pm and Tuesday June 14th also at 2 pm in the Visitor's Centre in the Dene. These, and future, meetings will be open where everyone is welcome and, we hope, will put forward their own ideas.
It is also a chance to see the committee in action and we welcome people interested in taking part. At present there are three vacancies as after giving valuable support three members have had to give up due to other commitments. (See words from Chairman). Anyone interested is welcome to attend meetings before deciding if supporting Jesmond Dene in this way is for them. Please phone Clive, number 07817 489861.

Maggie Dowman FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

FOJD Film and Video Club

Jesmond Dene Film Club is looking for new members to join our little team. We plan, film and edit films around the Ouseburn parks and have produced so far a couple of short films to advertise the Christmas Fairs, a Bee Keeping 'documentary' on the Visitor Centre's bees, a film documenting 'Autumn' around the Dene and a few short, funny films with talking animals and the like! We have a number of filmed scenes needing editing and ideas to take forward, and we usually meet on Sunday mornings.

If anyone is interested in learning how to use the camera or how to edit the films, training from myself, Clive or Gary will be available, although half the time we are learning ourselves and make it up as we go along!!

If you are interested, or would like to find out more, please do get in touch with myself, Helen, on 0191 2811748.

Helen Spicer, Member of FOJD Film

For more information on Jesmond Dene please see the following:-

Friends of Jesmond Dene http//www.jesmondDene.org.uk
Volunteer Rangers Old Mill Project http://www.jesmonddeneoldmill.org.uk/
Volunteer Rangers Nature Area Project http://www.jesmonddenenaturearea.org.uk/
'Autumn' video by FOJD film Group on YouTube http://youtu.be/NDIGg4Bib_g

Jesmond Community Festival

This will take place between 6 – 22nd May 2016. The Festival is organised by Jesmond Community Forum and all types of interesting activities have been arranged, most of the events are free. To find out more about these please go to www.jesmondfestival.org.uk or 'like' on www.facebook.com/jesmondfestival.

Yvonne Shannon FOJD, Volunteer Ranger

F. W. Rich – Architect to Lord Armstrong

In the1850's, Sarah Rich, the wife of a house carpenter, moved with her three sons from Derbyshire to Newcastle. You may not be familiar with the name of the second son, Frank West Rich, but you will almost certainly have seen buildings designed by his practice. The red-brick Turnbulls' warehouses, above the Quayside and now luxury apartments, St. Gabriels' Church, Heaton, and the Ouseburn Schools, now a business centre, are some of his works.

His association with Lord Armstrong and the Dene seems to have begun soon after he set up his office in Grainger Street in 1872. In 1875 Rich advertised contracts for the building of cottages at Rothbury, and for the lease of a brickyard at Heaton. An account from him to R. G. Hoare, for alterations to Millfield House, is dated 1876. A newspaper article of May 1878 describing the opening of Benton [now Armstrong] Bridge says 'the designs of the architectural features of the ironwork and abutments, and also the formation of the roads, are from designs by Mr. Frank W Rich, architect, New Grainger Street. That gentleman has given his constant and personal supervision to the carrying out of the undertaking, which occupied from June 1876 to March of the present year and no qualifying expression is needed in speaking of the very successful manner in which he has completed his task. '.

It would appear that Rich acted as the 'man-of business' for the development of Armstrong's Heaton estate, as the above article also says that ' At the end of Benton Bridge there is a piece of land ……which Mr Rich intends to lay out for building sites.' A letter from Rich to Armstrong in 1884 advises that 'the area between Heaton Road and Armstrong Park should be laid out with 41 villas along a central road with sites of eleven-and-a-half and one-third acres, largest near the bridge and smallest near terrace houses in Heaton.' and that 'Thomas Hood of Framlington Place has made an offer for one of eleven-and-a-half acres.'

The next record of any direct work in the Dene by Rich is in 1884. Rich's chief assistant in the practice from 1875 to 1889 was the architect H G Badenoch, who later in his life produced a brief biographical record, in which is included the works he had carried out during that period. This contains the following note, ' When Lord Armstrong presented the beautiful Jesmond Dene to Newcastle, the erection of the lodges, making of footpaths, and building of bridges was again in Mr Rich's hands, and I superintended most of the work and designed the one-span bridge besides the waterfall at the Old Mill '. He also carried out 'all the surveying, levelling, and setting out of streets' for Lord Armstrong's building estate at Heaton.

Several of Armstrong's business associates lived in close proximity to the Dene and commissioned Rich to design their dwellings. Major commissions were Wellburn House [c.1883 demolished c.1933] for W H Holmes, and extensive additions to Jesmond Dene House [now a hotel] in 1896 for Sir Andrew Noble. The house had previously been enlarged in 1862 by Norman Shaw; Rich had collaborated with Shaw in his work at Chesters in Northumberland in 1891. Rich also designed the unusual red-brick Real Tennis Court on Matthew Bank for Noble. Rich himself bought a small villa at 6 Jesmond Gardens and extended it to form a large family house [now divided into apartments], with an equally large conservatory. He also owned No.1 Collingwood Terrace.

I am in the process of compiling a list, from Badenoch's notes and other sources, of works which can be attributed to Rich and his practice, but there must be many which have not been recorded. There is also an almost complete absence of documentary evidence in connection with his life and practice, and I would welcome any further information. What I have found is contained in my paper, 'The Enigmatic Architect ', in Archaeologia Aeliana, Fifth Series, Volume XXXVIII, published by The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne.

John Penn FRIBA **,** Contributor and Park Visitor

Green Flag Award 2015

Jesmond Dene has once again been given this prestigious award. Comments from the judge who made an anonymous and unannounced visit on Friday 23rd October 2015 include:-

- Good directional signage from the road (Brown Tourist Sign) and also pedestrian links (Blue Pedestrian Signs).
- Entered from side of Armstrong Bridge parking area and the route towards the formal area is wide and welcoming. New bridge looks impressive and paths are open with no sightline issues.
- Various access improvements have been made for wheelchair / buggy users, with good wide level paths at main access points. There are obvious restrictions due to the steep topography of the site to make smaller entrances on the outskirts accessible.
- All entrances were well maintained.
- Armstrong Bridge board had some graffiti and was lacking up to date content but this seemed to be a one-off after checking other boards around the park. In general signage is good and very informative with clear maps and history etc.
- ... the footpath network is extensive and well used. It gives great access to the site and access improvements have been made. A few points were picked up on the visit: leaf debris / silt had formed at the side of some wooded paths below banks, and had not been cleared for quite some time: requires annual shovel clearance before it covers more of the path. On one of the upper paths a cut tree trunk has been left butted against the birds-mouth fencing. This could be logged and discarded on site.
- Did not encounter any park staff, but visitor centre attendant friendly and helpful.
- Toilets were open and clean, including pavilion toilets at far end. Visitor centre is a great asset and the interactive information is of excellent quality and value.
- Notice boards are solid and appear to be cleaned of graffiti regularly. Armstrong Bridge entrance appeared most affected with a few tags present on the day of the visit. A section of birds-mouth fence on one of the upper paths requires attention as it is starting to fall apart beside a steep slope. The pet cemetery headstones could possibly be strimmed occasionally to improve its appearance from the path. It is a quirky feature. The park building is in good condition and blends in beautifully to the park setting.
- Great play facilities and well maintained. Appropriate signage and there was grass reinstatement work underway.
- New benches are in good condition and it is clear there is an ongoing battle with graffiti being sanded off regularly. Good work by the staff team.
- The site is well provided with bins. Consider a single bin along the path after the new bridge to Coleman's field as some litter was present by the benches but no bin for visitors to use. In general the whole site had almost no litter which is impressive considering its size and coverage.
- No dog fouling encountered. Dog event advertised for Paddy Freemans park.
- Overall good standards being met. Only one area stood out as requiring attention: Overgrown Buddleia blocking access to handrails on steps to Coleman's field and the planting area either side of these steps is overgrown. Guerrilla gardening taking place along one main route where several Castlewellan Gold Leyland cypresses have been planted in a row on a shaded woodland path.
- Well used, friendly regulars and clearly a park policed by the community.
- What a fantastic park, which manages to reveal something new after every visit. The few suggestions made are just observations and would probably not be picked up by the general public, but still worth addressing. The park is very well used and the judge is under no illusions as to the amount of daily, weekly and annual maintenance required to keep it in such a condition. Well done to all the staff. The most interesting park in the region without a doubt. Keep up the excellent standards.

Many thanks to the Park Rangers, staff and all Volunteers who contribute to the upkeep of Jesmond Dene.

Yvonne Shannon FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

JESMOND DENE ARCHIVES

Whenever we talk to members of the public, people come up with memories of the Dene & surrounding Parks that add to the history of the area. If you have any visual records you could share with us, or stories from 10, 30 or even 50 years ago, we would love to hear from you.

You can contact us and/or send your memories for possible inclusion in the Newsletter: - **c/o FOJD Archives Project, Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Millfield House, Jesmond Dene**

Memories of Jesmond Dene

Mr. Bob Walker presented this glass photographic slide to the FOJD Archives in October 2015. Bob thinks his uncle James Walker took the photograph around about the 1930's. As you can see it shows the Old Mill in a very good state of repair with parts of the overhead flume still in position. Of greater interest is the lady with the pram. The lady is Bob's Grandma and the baby is most likely his Aunt Evelyn. James Walker took the picture of his mother and baby sister when he was about 17 or 18 years old, Bob remembers that his uncle was very adept at most things he turned his hand to, and his interest in camera work is apparent in the quality of this photograph. Bob adds that there was a large age gap of about 18 years between his Uncle James and Aunt Evelyn, he was one of four boys but Evelyn was the only girl. The notice on the bottom right of the photograph reads 'Notice The Public are Requested not to sit on the Parapet of the Bridge.'

Old Mill c. 1930's

Yvonne Shannon FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Mr. Coleman

On Sunday 14th January, which happened to be National Bird Nesting Day, one of the park visitors called in and related a very interesting anecdote.
He said that he had been coming to Jesmond Dene for many years and recalled that about 70 years ago he used to visit Mr. Coleman the farmer who lived at Heaton Dene House on what is now known as Coleman's Field. (this is the grassy area running from Armstrong Bridge up to Pets' Corner). The house was pulled down in the 1950's and nothing remains except the gateposts as shown below.

Entrance to Coleman's Field 2016 (Entrance to Heaton Dene House 1950's)

Our visitor remembered buying black pudding from the basement of the house in which cured hams used to hang – all made from the farmer's own pigs which must have been kept in the Dene. Mr. Coleman used to keep a shotgun and our visitor remembered going out with him and shooting pheasants and rabbits. On some occasions they took a fishing rod and caught trout from the Ouseburn. The farmer ran a butchers shop in the Grainger Market where he sold the pheasants and rabbits as well as farmed meat.

During his working career our visitor was instrumental in the renovation of the footbridge between Armstrong Park and Jesmond Dene, as he was the engineer in charge of this not inconsiderable work.

Yvonne Shannon FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Pets Corner - developments

Since the refurbishment of Pets' Corner there have been a number of changes to the layout. The Keepers have been active in using the money raised via the public donations on projects to enhance the space and give us the option to house more animals.

One change was to add more collection boxes to facilitate the donation of money by our many visitors. This has worked quite well; the use of sponsorship schemes of individual pens to raise extra income has also been successful.

The money raised will be spent on three new pens in Pets' Corner all of which will have nets over the top so we can put birds in them.

The largest pen is designated for Peacocks; this will be finished and occupied very soon with two birds from Kirkley Hall College. The smallest pen which is home to five Scots Grey hens at the moment is the 'not sure' pen. We hope to remove these hens to another part of Pets' Corner and instead cultivate some plants and use it in the summer for tortoises on loan from Askham Bryan College.

The middle pen which has turkeys on loan from Ouseburn Farm will be netted next and we hope to add our own turkeys in the near future.
The grassed area in the middle of Pets' Corner will be enclosed with the refurbished old bowling green fence from Heaton Park to put in animals during the day and be used as a display space for petting days.

Ken and Hazel Pets' Corner Keepers

Prince's Regeneration Trust workshop focuses on Dene and Banqueting Hall

More than a hundred local people shared their ideas on the future of Jesmond Dene and the Banqueting Hall during open meetings at Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre and City Library on 9 March. The two interactive sessions were part of a three-day workshop organised by Jesmond Heritage and the Prince's Regeneration Trust.

Jesmond Heritage was founded a year ago to work for the restoration and regeneration of the built heritage of Jesmond Dene according to the wishes of Lord Armstrong, as expressed in his two Deeds of Gift of 1883, and for the benefit of all the citizens of Newcastle. The group includes representatives of the Friends of Jesmond Dene, Armstrong Studio Trust, and the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape at Newcastle University.

The Prince's Regeneration Trust (one of the charities of the Prince of Wales) is a world-leading regeneration body working in hard-hit areas of the UK to rescue and reuse local buildings to create maximum community benefit and transform lives.

The PRT workshop was convened to look at options for Jesmond Dene Banqueting Hall, which – along with the Dene itself – was given to the people of Newcastle in perpetuity, but has been a semi-ruin for 40 years. Armstrong also bequeathed four 'endowment properties' intended to produce income for the upkeep of the Dene and the Hall. The only surviving endowment property is Deep Dene house, also known as Fisherman's Lodge, recently used as a restaurant but now vacant and boarded up.

New proposals for Jesmond Dene Banqueting Hall include an arts and heritage centre, an innovation hub, and a gallery, exhibition and performance space – all of which comply with

Armstrong's stipulation that the Hall should be used only for 'arts, literature, science and education'. While Fisherman's Lodge may one day reopen as a restaurant or gastropub specialising in local produce, there are also proposals to transform it into a cookery school and an organic garden and greenhouse.

A group of postgraduate architecture students from Newcastle University [1] displayed their own illustrated proposals for the future use of the buildings in the wider context of Jesmond Dene, using green solutions to address functional challenges such as energy generation, transport and parking. Other groups represented at the workshop included the National Trust, which is keen to foster links between Jesmond Dene and Cragside, Tyne & Wear Building Preservation Trust, and Newcastle City Council.

The council's decision to seek a new form of governance for all Newcastle's parks has increased the scope of the talks to include Jesmond Dene as a whole, widening the debate begun by the Newcastle Parks Forum. Anyone who wishes to contribute comments or ideas on the future of Jesmond Dene and the Banqueting Hall is invited to email to Jesmond Heritage or the Friends of Jesmond Dene via one of the following websites: www.williamarmstrong.info or www.jesmonddene.org

Henrietta Heald Chairwoman of Jesmond Heritage Trust, Author and Editor.

1. The students are studying for a Masters Degree course for sustainable buildings and environments in the school of Architecture Planning and Landscape, Newcastle University.
Course Director is Dr. Neveen Hamza, PhD, MSc, BSc(Hons) PCAP
Senior Lecturer in Architecture
Students :- Ramy Mahmoud, Kawar Salih, Shauna Buckley, Azadeh Khalafian, Gabyledesma Ledesma Hidalgo, Rosy Rivera Lara, and Zhengkai Lu

an example of student work is shown below.

Rangers Update - Christmas Events

Christmas would not be Christmas without the traditional Christmas Wreath and Family Festive Fun events in the Dene and neither would happen without the support and help from the Volunteers Rangers and Friends of Jesmond Dene.

As Dave mentions in his report, the Volunteer Rangers helped by collecting numerous bags of greenery for the wreaths. This task was made a little easier this year as several of the trees we lost due to heavy rain and winds where suitable to use. Help is also needed to deliver the events with the main task being tidying up at the end - it can get a little messy but it's all good fun, so thanks to some of the Friends who helped with this.

Last year we ran a record breaking seven wreath events with three of them being booked out by groups and four open to the general public. Can we make it eight this year?! Janet from the Visitor Centre is encouraging me to organise the dates earlier this year so if you would like to take part in what has become a Christmas tradition in Jesmond Dene, dates and bookings will be available from October 1. Contact the Visitor Centre on (0191) 2812082 or email parks&countryside@newcastle.gov.uk

Two of our regular participants

Sarah Capes Park Ranger

Winter tasks performed by Jesmond Dene Volunteer Rangers

Path clearing. The volunteers spent several sessions scraping mud and leaves from the paths in Jesmond Dene as well as tidying the edges where grass and weeds have encroached. With the extensive network of paths that exists, there is never a shortage of places that need this work to be done.

Path clearing near North West Lodge

Cutting back shrubs. that were encroaching on paths in the Dene and Armstrong Park. This is a task that takes place most of the winter months.

Cleaning up the river. Debris is always being carried into the Dene from further up-river, especially after heavy rainfall. The debris often gets caught upon rocks or against the buttresses of bridges and can build up into quite a large pile. In these cases we have river clearing sessions, where volunteers in waders go into the river to clear the blockages while other volunteers on the bank haul the debris ashore and dispose of it. These sessions tend to be very dirty and smelly.

Tree clearing and chipping. High winds during the winter have caused quite a few trees to come down. An oak and a beech came down at the Picnic Field as well as a poplar near the Banqueting Hall, amongst others. Some of the fallen trees resulted in blocked paths. These required either the Council chainsaw team, or Rangers Sarah and Mike to cut the timber into manageable pieces that could be dragged aside. In addition any suitably-sized branches were chopped up into logs that were then transported back to the volunteers centre where we have a wood store. We now have a plentiful supply of wood which we are in the process of splitting and bagging so that it can be dried out and put on sale in the Visitor's centre ready for next winter.

The timber that was not suitable for logs was stacked ready for chipping and when a chipper was available a volunteer session would be devoted to chipping the timber. This requires a few volunteers both feeding the chipper and dragging the timber to the chipper. Chipping sessions are always quite vigorous work-outs for all concerned.

Clearing up fallen Beech tree on the Picnic Field

Cleaning out the pond near Fisherman's Lodge. The outlet of the pond periodically gets blocked with leaves and debris. Now and then it is necessary to take some drainage rods up to the pond and clear the outlet until the water is running freely into the river.

Making bat boxes and bird boxes. As with last year, some of the volunteers have been involved in making bat boxes and bird boxes from wood provided by Sarah the Park Ranger. The wood for the bat boxes had to be untreated as bats are very fussy about chemicals in places they make their roosts. This year Sarah was requested to provide some bat boxes and bird boxes for Iris Brickfield, to be erected on that site. Some of the bird boxes are on sale at the visitors centre.

Bird box kits and bird feeder kits have also been made in large numbers. These are for sessions that Sarah often holds for children to fit together their own bird feeders, with a little adult guidance.

Collecting greenery for use in Christmas wreath-making sessions and Sarah had the volunteers collecting cuttings of yew, holly and other greenery to be used in those sessions.

The volunteers spent some **sessions at Havannah and Big Waters Nature Reserves** repairing paths and boardwalks, repairing bridges, tidying up paths and clearing water courses.

Some time was spent in an area **alongside the Coast Road** preparing a wild-flower meadow. This involved raking the growth from the previous year and removing it so as not to provide a high level of nutrients for wildflowers. When this was done new wild-flower seeds were sown.

The Nature Area. The Nature Area, across the river from Pets Corner, always needs a tidy-up at the end of winter. This involves cleaning out the gutters of the shelter, putting down new chippings on some of the paths, clearing weeds from the pond, weeding and cutting back around the wildflower meadow. There are several bird boxes with CCTV cameras in them, and these had to be cleaned out and the cameras checked and reset.

Installing an information board next to the **Old Pear Tree** in Heaton Park.

Several weekend sessions were arranged in conjunction with **Friends of Heaton and Armstrong Parks** in which the Volunteers helped them to tidy up Heaton Park by cutting back shrubs, path clearing, clearing blocked drains and litter-picking. One session was spent tidying up around the old paddling pool where a fallen beech tree had been turned into a piece of tree art, “the Fall”. Work was also done tidying up around the other piece of tree sculpture in Heaton Park, “Plane Curve”, on the path leading down from Heaton View.

Anyone wishing to become a Volunteer Ranger should contact Sarah or Mike on 0191 2812082 or email parks&countryside@newcastle.gov.uk

Dave Poste FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Please see up to date activities on the FOJD Facebook page

Please like our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofJesmondDene and/or join our Facebook group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/757773184342507/, to find out about future events in the Dene

April – October 2016 Ouseburn Park Events

Sunday 27 March 10 - 1pm
Nature Area Open Day
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, mini beast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Sunday 3 April 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets’ Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets’ Corner.

Monday 4 April 1 – 3.30pm
Nature Area Open Day
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, mini beast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Thursday 7 April 10.30 – 12.00pm
Wiggly worms
Jesmond Dene (Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
£5
Build a wormery, and then join us for a look around the Dene to see if we can find some worms and see what other mini-beasts might be hiding.
Please bring an empty, clean 2 litre plastic bottle for your wormery. All other materials will be provided. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884. Tickets should be pre-booked through www.nwt.org.uk/whats-on

Thursday 7 April 12.00 – 2.00pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park
Jesmond Dene (Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Donations welcome
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun games and activities.
Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

Thursday 7 April 6 - 8pm
Heaton Park Walk
£3 per person
Explore the history of Heaton Park, on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. Meet at the Pavilion. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Friday 8 April 1 – 3.30pm
Bushcraft, Campfire and Games
Heaton Park
£3 per child, £3 per adult
Join the Rangers for some fun games and activities followed by learning to light a fire along with some campfire refreshments. Activities are aimed at 7-13 years. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please wear appropriate clothes for being outdoors in the woods. Booking essential, please call 0191 2812082 to book and for more information.

Saturday 9 April 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Sunday 17 April 1.30 – 3.30pm
Jesmond Dene Walk
£3 per person
Explore the history of Jesmond Dene, on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. Meet at the Visitor Centre. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Sunday 1 May 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Friday 6 May (Evening - time to be confirmed on booking)
Bats and Moths
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre- Jesmond Dene
£5 per person
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
Learn about the different species of bats that live in the UK with a short talk and then we'll set out for a walk and see which ones we can find, so don't forget your torch! We will also be running a moth trap throughout the evening and we will have a look to see what has been caught on our return to the Visitor Centre. Suggested age 8+, children must be accompanied. **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for access details.

Saturday 7 May 10am – 12pm
Moth Morning and Pond Dipping
Nature Area
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
We'll go through the moth trap from the night before to see what we've managed to catch and try our best to identify them before letting them go. You can also try some pond dipping to see what creatures live under water in the Nature Area. This is a drop in event and you can stay as long or as little as you like. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Sunday 8 May 4.30 – 7.30am (yes am! The walk will be about 2 hours.)
Dawn Chorus
Ouseburn Parks – Jesmond Dene
£6 per person
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
To celebrate International Dawn Chorus Day join the Rangers and Volunteer Rangers on this early morning walk through the Dene to listen to the delightful sounds of the birds. We'll come back to the Visitor Centre for a breakfast roll, a hot drink and show you some footage of other wildlife in the Dene. Suitable for adults and older children (12+). **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for more information.

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 May 10 – 3pm
Friends of Jesmond Dene Open Weekend
(Including AGM on Sunday at 2pm)
Drop by either day and find out what the Friends and Volunteer Rangers get up to, how they help and support the parks staff in keeping Jesmond Dene a popular visitor attraction. There will be history displays, information about the archive project, the "Adopt a Plot" scheme, video footage of the wildlife in the Dene and history walks. The Visitor Centre and gift shop will also be open.

Tuesday 10 May 10 – 12.30pm
Volunteer Open Day
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre - Jesmond Dene
(Part of the Jesmond Community Festival)
Come along to Jesmond Dene and meet the Friends and Volunteer Rangers to find out what they get up to. We have various different volunteer opportunities: guided walks, practical sessions, bee keeping, events, archive project and lots more. We can show you more detail of our various activities and discuss how we manage them all. We're also interested in hearing your ideas for other ways people can contribute to the well-being of the Dene, its wildlife and visitors. Do you have skills and interests you think we should know about? For more information contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 281 2082 or email parks&countryside@newcastle.gov.uk If you are interested in volunteering but can't make this date, please get in touch and we will let you know other dates that you can come along to.

Friday 13 May (Evening - time to be confirmed on booking)
Bat Walk
Heaton Park
£5 per person
Learn about the different species of bats that live in the UK on this walk around Heaton and Armstrong Park and Jesmond Vale. Don't forget your torch! Suggested age 8+, children must be accompanied. **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for access details.

Saturday 21 May 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Wednesday 1 June 1 – 3.30pm
Nature Area Open Day
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs) Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, minibeast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Thursday 2 June 10.30 – 12.00pm
Fabulous flowers
Jesmond Dene (Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
£5
Make a seed bomb to plant in your garden or in a plant pot to get some fabulous flowers of your own. Then we'll have a look around the Dene to see what flowers are growing, who might visit them and why they're important.
All materials will be provided. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884. Tickets should be pre-booked through www.nwt.org.uk/whats-on

Thursday 2 June 12.00 – 2.00pm
Northumberland Wildlife Trust at the Park
Jesmond Dene (Look out for the big green gazebo on the grass by Pet's Corner)
Donations welcome
Come and find out more about the work we do at NWT to protect our region's wildlife and have a go at some fun games and activities.
Donations are welcome to cover the cost of materials. Dress appropriately for the outdoors. All children must be accompanied. Please contact Northumberland Wildlife Trust for more information on 0191 284 6884.

Sunday 5 June 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Tuesday 14 June 6 - 8pm
Armstrong Park and Jesmond Vale
£3 per person
Learn about Robin Sheep's cave and visit the Shoe Tree on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 18 June 10 – 12pm
Volunteer Session
Heaton and Armstrong Parks
Join the Friends of Heaton and Armstrong Park on this, one of their regular volunteer sessions. All tools will be provided, supervision by the Rangers and please dress appropriate for the weather. Please contact 0191 2650564 or email parks&countryside@newcastle.gov.uk to let us know you'll be coming along. Keep an eye on the notice board near the park lodge for other volunteer dates.

Saturday 18 June11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Sunday 19 June 1 – 4pm
Garden Party
Heaton Park Lodge Garden
Join the Friends and Rangers to find out more about the past, present and future of Heaton and Armstrong Parks. The Friends will be offering refreshments and plants will be on sale to raise funds. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Saturday 26 June 1.30 – 3.30pm
St Mary's Chapel and Well
£3 per person
Learn about St Marys Chapel and Well as well the surrounding area on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Sunday 3 July 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.
Saturday 23 July 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Tuesday 26 July 1 – 4pm
Nature Area Open Day
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, minibeast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Wednesday 3 August 1 – 4pm
Buzzing Bees and other Bugs
Paddy Freeman's Park – (next to the Café)
Suggested donation £2 Learn amazing facts about honey bees and beekeeping. Follow clues on a short trail to find out more, try on a bee suit and take part in other bug activities. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Friday 5 August 10 – 12.30pm
Bushcraft, Campfire and Games
Heaton Park
£3 per child, £3 per adult
Join the Rangers for some fun games and activities followed by a learning to light a fire with some campfire refreshments. Activities are aimed at 7-13 years. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please wear appropriate clothes for being outdoors in the woods. **Booking essential**, please call 0191 2812082 to book and for more information

Saturday 6 August 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Sunday 7 August 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Sunday 21 August 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Tuesday 23 August 1 – 3.30pm
Bushcraft, Campfire and Environmental Games
Heaton Park
£3 per child, £3 per adult
Join the Rangers for some fun games and activities followed by a learning to light a fire with some campfire refreshments. Activities are aimed at 7-13 years. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Please wear appropriate clothes for being outdoors in the woods. **Booking essential**, please call 0191 2812082 to book and for more information

Friday 26 August 1 – 4pm
Nature Area Open Day
Jesmond Dene
Donations welcome
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
Come and explore our Nature Area, take part in pond dipping, minibeast hunts and watch the birds at the feeding station. This is a drop in event and all children must be accompanied. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Tuesday 30 August 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Saturday 3 September 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Sunday 4 September 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Thursday 8 September 1 – 2.30pm
Heaton Park Guided walk – Mines, a Temple, Bears and much more!
(Part of the Heritage Open Days)
Explore the history of Heaton Park, on this guided walk in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. Meet at the Pavilion.
Booking essential. Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 10 September 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus.

Saturday 10 September (Evening - time to be confirmed on booking)
Bats and Moths
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre- Jesmond Dene
£5 per person
Learn about the different species of bats that live in the UK, and then we'll set out for a walk and see which ones we can find, so don't forget your torch! We will also be running a moth trap throughout the evening and we will have a look to see what has been caught on our return to the Visitor Centre. Suggested age 8+, children must be accompanied. **Booking essential**. Please contact the Visitor Centre on 0191 2812082 to book your place and for access details.

Sunday 11 September 10am – 12pm
Moth Morning and Pond Dipping
Nature Area
Donations welcomed
(Across the River from Pets Corner – look out for the signs)
We'll go through the moth trap from the night before to see what we've managed to catch and try our best to identify them before letting them go. You can also try some pond dipping to see what creatures live under water in the Nature Area. This is a drop in event and you can stay as long or as little as you like. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information 0191 281 2082.

Sunday 11 September 1 – 3pm
Jesmond Dene Guided Walk
Meet at Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene
(Part of the Heritage Open Days)
Join our fantastic guides on a walk through Jesmond Dene finding out about the past, present and future of this park.
Booking essential. Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Sunday 2 October 1 – 3pm (First Sunday of every month April - October)
Meet the animals
Pets' Corner Jesmond Dene
Suggested donation £1 per child
This is a drop in event where you will be able to handle and meet some of the animals in Pets' Corner.

Sunday 16 October 10 - 11.30 or 12 - 1.30
Bulb Planting and Autumn Activity Sessions
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene (next to Millfield House Cafe)
£5 per child
Come and plant some bulbs to take home with you and nurture. There will be nature trail, scavenger hunt as well as arts and crafts. Please contact the Visitor Centre for more information and to book your place on 0191 2812082.

Saturday 22 October 1.30 – 3.30pm
Paddy Freeman's and Wild Jesmond
£3 per person
Find out about the Freeman Family and see some less well know sites of Jesmond Dene on this guided walk, in the company of volunteers who are passionate about the parks. **Booking essential.** Please phone 0191 2812082 to book.

Saturday 22 October 11 – 3pm
Kirkley Hall Zoological Gardens comes to Pets Corner, Jesmond Dene
Come and meet the team and some of the animals from the zoo. Chat to the team to find out how you can sign up for an animal care or land based course here at Jesmond Dene and Kirkley Hall Campus. **Booking essential**

Friday 28 October 10.30 - 12pm, 1 - 2.30pm
Pumpkin Carving and Camp Fire
Jesmond Dene
£7.50 per child (including pumpkin), Adults £2.50
Join the Rangers and Volunteers in the woods, carve a pumpkin and other spooky activities around a camp fire. There will be hot chocolate, marshmallows and toffee apples too! Booking essential and all children must accompanied. Maximum 2 adults per child. Suggested age 5+. **Booking essential.** Please call to book your place 0191 2812082.

Friday 28 October 6.30 - 8.30pm
Halloween Pumpkin Walk
Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre - Jesmond Dene
Children £5, Adults £2.50
Bring your own pumpkin lantern along with your spooky Halloween costumes and join us an evening walk through the woods - there may be eyes watching us from all sorts of places and you never know who we might meet on the way! We'll return to the Visitor Centre for pumpkin soup and hot chocolate. Minimum age 6 years. Maximum 2 adults per child. **Booking essential** and all children must be accompanied. Please call to book your place and for more information on 0191 2812082.

Committee list:

Chairman	Clive Gerrard
Vice Chairman	Mike Cook
Treasurer	Lynda Fean
Secretary	Sue Stokel-Walker
Members	Maggie Dowman
Membership Sec.	Keith Pringle
N**ewsletter Team**	Maggie Dowman, Yvonne Shannon

Sarah Capes (Ranger, 0191265 0564) sarah.capes@newcastle.gov.uk mobile 07966 264391

Webmaster Carlton Reid http//www.jesmondDene.org.uk

Next Newsletter contributions or any other queries to:-
Friends of Jesmond Dene, c/o Ouseburn Parks Visitor Centre, Millfield House, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7BQ or email as above