Friends of Jesmond Dene Newsletter

Autumn 2018 **Number 82**

Patron - John Grundy

Reg Charity no: 702260 Web Site Address: http//www.jesmondDene.org.uk

Postal address: 'Friends of Jesmond Dene', c/o Ouseburn Parks' Visitor Centre, Red Walk, Jesmond Dene, Newcastle, NE7 7BQ.

Heron in the Ouseburn

Brian C. Barker took this photograph of a Grey Heron in the Dene on May 23rd, 2018. It had just caught a 9 Spine Stickleback which is in its bill

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An Urgent Message from the Membership Secretary

If you are reading this Newsletter and have not received your usual copy by email – then please get in touch with me at cameldriverutility@yahoo.co.uk

In May 2018 new governmental regulations came into effect known as General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). One consequence for us was that we were obliged to get explicit approval from each of you if we were to be allowed to continue sending communications by email.

We did contact all on our mailing list, asking each of you to confirm if you wished to receive our Newsletters and other membership information by email. Most people did reply positively, but some people did not reply and in these cases, we have been obliged to remove people from the mailing list.

If this has happened to you, or for other reasons you would like to be on our email list, then please contact me at the above address. Of course, we continue to have other digital options available such as our website and our Facebook page.

Keith Pringle Membership Secretary Friends of Jesmond Dene

Annual General Meeting 2018

The Annual General Meeting was held on **Sunday, 13 May at 2:00 pm**; in the Classroom of the Visitor Centre in Jesmond Dene. Tea and coffee were available.

The business side of the meeting included the election of officers, a financial report, the chairman's report and time to discuss other issues that residents / parks users wish to raise.

Election of Officers Lynda Fean, the current Treasurer is standing down after 4 years on the committee. The Chair thanked her for all her hard work.
The Chair asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the officer posts; there were none. Luckily, two of the existing officers agreed to put themselves forward to serve for another year and a new member agreed to be the Treasurer. The following were proposed, seconded and duly elected:

The Officers are:	**Chair**	**Clive Gerrard**
	Treasurer	**Jacki Holmes**
	Secretary	**Sue Stokel-Walker**

Committee members: **John Blakemore, Robert Brandt, Geoffrey Carter**
Sarah Capes is the co-opted representative from Newcastle City Council.
Keith Pringle remains Honorary Membership Secretary.
Geoffrey Carter remains our Independent examiner for the annual accounts.

Once business was concluded, our new Patron, John Grundy, proceeded to provide a very entertaining and informative talk giving examples of philanthropy in the northeast through the ages.

Minutes have been sent out to FOJD.

Date and time
The date of the next AGM will be **Sunday, 12 May 2019** at 2:00 pm in the Classroom of the Visitor Centre, Jesmond Dene. All are welcome.

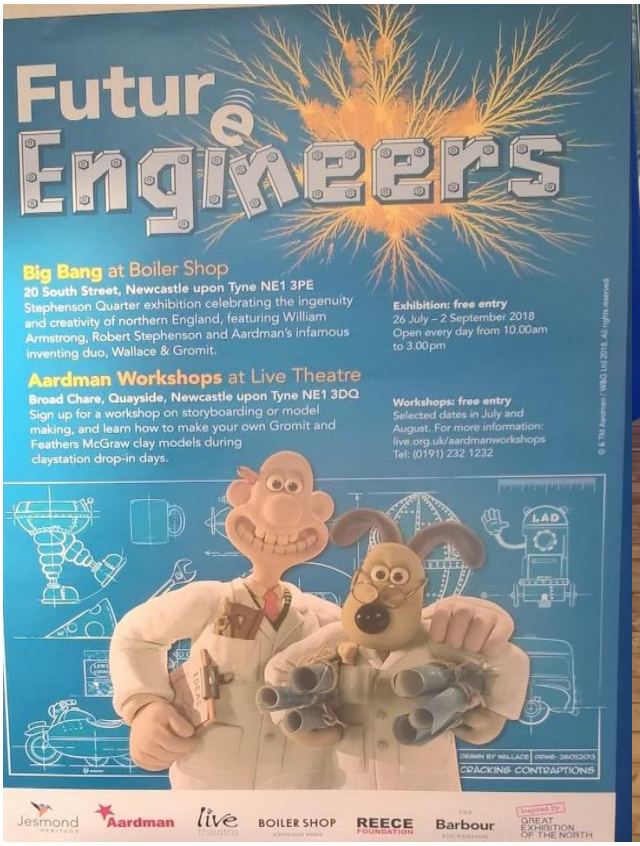
Yvonne Shannon FOJD

We acknowledge the commitment of Seamus Tollitt who left his job at the council earlier this year as Manager of the Ouseburn Parks. Seamus will be a big miss, he has always fully supported the FOJD and Volunteer Rangers, and we wish him the very best for the future.

Banqueting Hall

'Jesmond Heritage' are a group seeking to restore the Banqueting Hall in Jesmond Dene. As part of the Great North Exhibition they organised 'Future Engineers', an exhibit in the Stephenson Quarter held at the Boiler Shop (the place where Stephenson built The Rocket) lasting from 26th July – 2nd September 2018.

This exhibition celebrated the creativity and innovation of northern England featuring William Armstrong, Robert Stephenson and Aardman's famous inventing duo, Wallace and Gromit. On display were Aardman sets, props and models.



Poster for Future Engineers

One of the sets on display

Jesmond Heritage write that " The intended legacy of 'Future Engineers' is to create a memorial to Lord Armstrong in Newcastle, in the form of Armstrong Centre of Arts and Innovation in Jesmond Dene. When making his gift of Jesmond Dene and the Banqueting Hall to the City in 1883 Armstrong stipulated that the Hall should be used for activities connected with, arts, science, literature or education. This vision is championed by Jesmond Heritage, a group which seeks to restore the Banqueting Hall. "

FOJD looking at the Great Exhibition of the North exhibits

Yvonne Shannon FOJD

Gosforth East Middle School Visit to Jesmond Dene

Students from Gosforth East Middle School came to the Dene and helped the Rangers and Pets Corner Keepers in several different ways, an account of their exploits is told below in their own words: -

Pupils from Gosforth East Middle School helping in the Nature Area.

Joyful Jesmond

Jesmond had a lot of minions to help them restore the park on the 21st of February. I was among those few who were picked out of a hat after it was announced in assembly. We had to sign up in the resource area if we wanted to go. There were lots of people who had an interest in nature. The British Pride took 15 pupils including themselves to Jesmond Dean to do some activities. The 15 students were split into two groups. One group went to the pet corner first and one group went to the nature area. In the nature area we repaired the bug hotel. We also made insect homes and planted some wild flowers. On top of all that we made a bat house.
In the petting corner we cleaned out the hamsters and petted them. We all had a fantastic time.

Our Experience at Jesmond Dene

We started the Key Group British Pride because we wanted to have a go at organising a trip. We had the idea of helping Jesmond Dene Rangers because we wanted to help the community and wildlife. We thought that this community would be good to support as it provided good activities as well as helping the wildlife. We are helping the wildlife because some are endangered, and some animals are dying because of pollution or eating things which are bad for them.

The first step in our project was when we met Sarah (a Jesmond Dene Ranger) and we discussed all the ideas we had. We used our skills of compromise as we organised what we were going to do for the trip to Jesmond Dene. Some activities were: making bird feeders, building new insect houses and even seed planting.

The next step was when we had to talk to some members of the Key, tell them our plans for the trip, and convince them that out project was worth sponsoring with their money. This was a tricky task as it tested our ability to speak for ourselves and convey our ideas to others. Overall it helped us and improved our skills for the future.

Lots of people took part in the trip. We encouraged as many people as we could by speaking at the assembly and asking them to sign up in the resource area at KS2. To choose who was coming to the trip, we decided to pick names out of a hat because there were too many people to take. We had worked out our budget, so we knew we had enough money for the things that we would do at Jesmond Dene.

We travelled on a minibus all the way to Jesmond Dene and we met other rangers like Cath, who helped us with seed planting, and Ken, who helped at pets' corner. Everyone had lots of fun (especially when they were feeding animals).

By Jeffrey and Josh

Photographs showing the children at work

Creative wood work

Getting their hands dirty

Membership FOJD

- 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.

To join the FOJD contact **Keith Pringle,** at the address on the last page of this newsletter**.** To join the Jesmond Dene Volunteer Rangers or if you are interested in the Adopt-a-Plot scheme please contact Sarah on 0191 2650564 or email sarah.capes@newcastle.gov.uk

Newcastle Parks Trust

The new trust is expected to take over Newcastle parks next year. To date the current members are: -

Jim Beirne MBE who is the Chair. He is Chief executive of 'Live Theatre'. He has a background working with charities and, a history of contribution to the civic and cultural life of the city. Jim has led Live Theatre since 2000, during which time it has benefited from a £19 million capital development, creating a social enterprise model that includes a cultural hub of award-winning buildings and restaurants.

Kim McGuiness is Vice Chair. She is Newcastle Council's cabinet member for Culture, Sport and Public Health. Kim is a trustee of Sport Newcastle, the Heart of the City Partnership (Newcastle Castle) and is Vice Chair of Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums.

Brian Aitken - former editor of Newcastle newspaper The Journal who now runs a PR firm Brian Aitken Associates whose clients include Newcastle United and Newcastle College.

Val Keen, a civil servant in the Homelessness Division at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government who has led on the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Rob Cameron - owner and director of 'container community' By The River Brew Co, pubs and micro-breweries including Wylam Brewery located in The Palace of Arts in the Exhibition Park.

Paul Collings – runs a selection of small businesses that supply children's play, sports and leisure equipment across the country.

Tricia Cresswell - former director of public health for Newcastle and North Tyneside now retired after 36 years of working for the NHS and Public Health England.

Kate Culverhouse - executive director of Groundworks.

Nigel Emmerson - solicitor and partner in Newcastle headquartered - Womble Bond Dickinson UK LLP law firm who also sits on the board of Byker Community Trust. Real estate law specialist.

Ella Ritchie OBE – former deputy vice chancellor at Newcastle University and politics lecturer. Currently a consultant on projects such as the Fairness Commission and Learning Challenge.

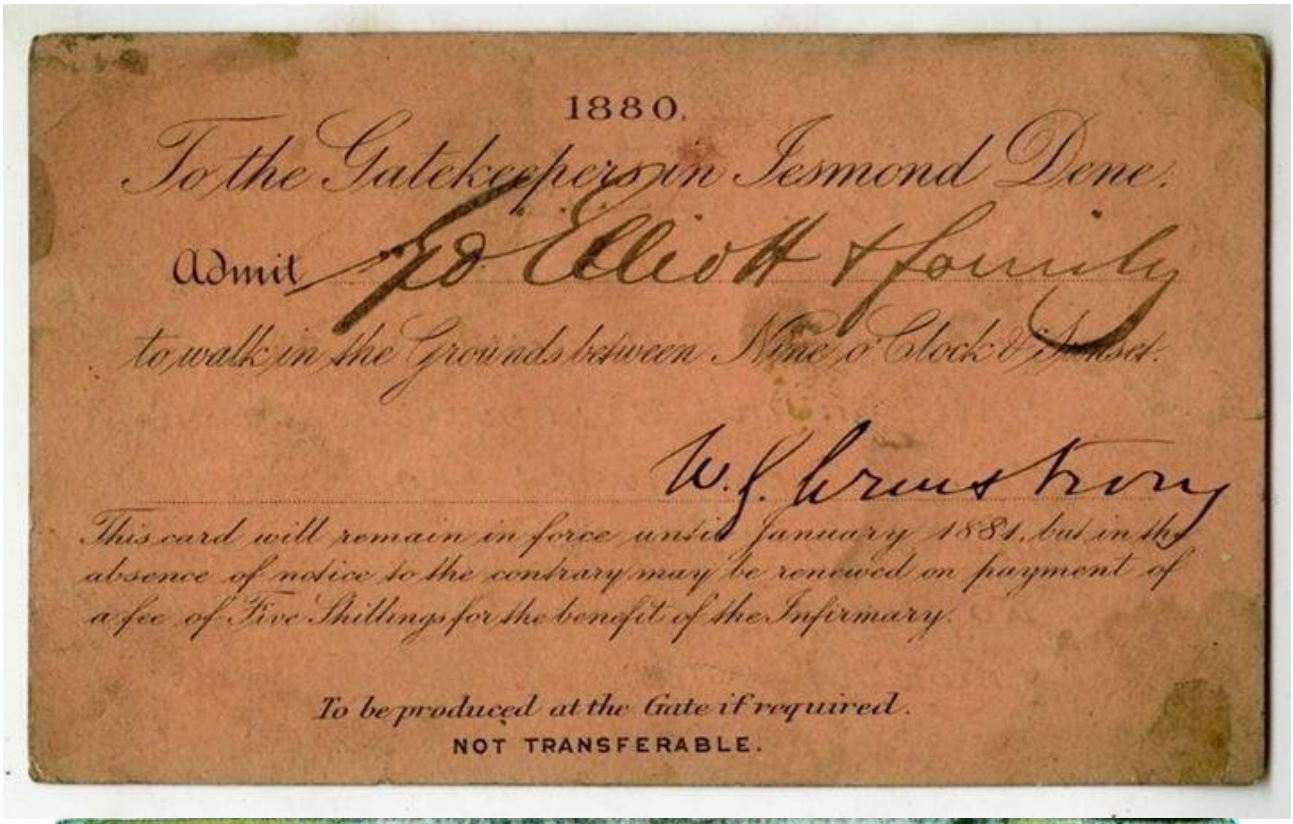
Gina Tiller - chair of North Cumbria University Hospitals Trust has valuable experience of working on multi-agency boards.

Marion Williams – councillor for the Callerton & Throckley ward, former director of the Civic Trust and trustee of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. A volunteer at Leazes Park.

As of 25th September 2018 no CEO had yet been appointed for the Newcastle Parks Trust. All applicants had been rejected and the job had been re-advertised

Old Jesmond Dene

This ticket from The Beamish Collection shows how times have changed. It is dated 1880 when Jesmond Dene was still a private garden to the Armstrong's. It wasn't until 1884 that it was put into public ownership. Interesting distinction between 'children' and 'boys'!



1880.

To the Gatekeepers in Jesmond Dene.

Admit Mr Elliott & family

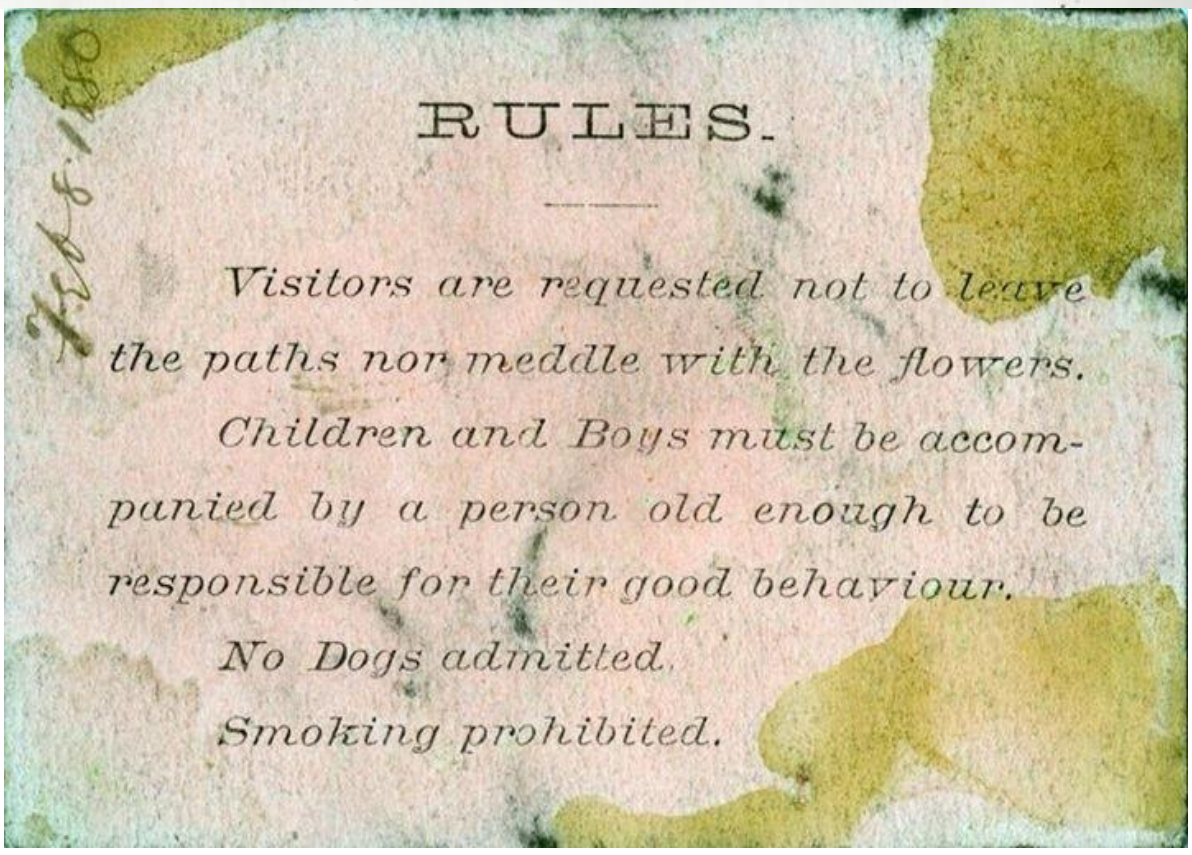
to walk in the Grounds between Nine o'Clock & Sunset.

W. G. Armstrong

This card will remain in force until January 1881, but in the absence of notice to the contrary may be renewed on payment of a fee of Five Shillings for the benefit of the Infirmary.

To be produced at the Gate if required.

NOT TRANSFERABLE.



RULES.

Visitors are requested not to leave the paths nor meddle with the flowers.

Children and Boys must be accompanied by a person old enough to be responsible for their good behaviour.

No Dogs admitted.

Smoking prohibited.

Yvonne Shannon FOJD

Rotary Club Trees

Last year Rotary International challenged every Rotary club to make a difference by planting a tree for each of its members by the end of April. The Rotary Club of Newcastle Upon Tyne achieved this many times over by sponsored the planting of over 1000 trees.

As part of this initiative, we were pleased to be able to supply 90 young native trees to Jesmond Dene for re-planting north of Fisherman's Lodge and on the beech bank opposite the pavilion, near the Old Mill.

David Houpt Rotary Club

Stepping Stones

Susan Olsburgh shares a memory of her time in Jesmond Dene; she writes:

'I used to be a friend of Jesmond Dene and before moving to Israel nearly eight years ago gave some of my Victorian souvenir china to the Millfield House Cafe as Jesmond Dene was featured. Recently I published a collection of my poems including this one referring to the stepping stones at Jesmond Dene.'

A Leap Year Memory
Leap
across the stepping stones
childhood's dare at the
River Ouse in Jesmond Dene
childhood's happy scene,
mostly,
but those steps challenged.
Below, cold mauve grey water
churning downstream
and to slip on those mossy stones!
Others forged ahead
already across the gorge
and I stood dithering, slithering,
uncertain, ill at ease, rankled,
yearning to be part of the scene,
burning to cross the Ouseburn
yet hanging back
not quite ready then for that great
leap.

Susan Olsburgh

Update on Spring and Summer tasks performed by Jesmond Dene Volunteer Rangers

Path clearing and cutting back

Much of the work carried out by the volunteer rangers involves keeping the paths in Jesmond Dene (and other city parks) clear and tidy. This involves clearing away mud and rotted leaves that have been washed onto the paths during wet weather. The volunteer rangers also cut back vegetation that has encroached onto the paths, such as grass, brambles, nettles and ivy. We try to leave a neat path edge where possible. The work can be quite energetic and certainly gets the blood flowing. The main problem is often where to dispose of waste products from our path-clearing work, if there isn't a convenient set of bushes nearby. The volunteer rangers also clear paths in Paddy Freemans, Heaton Park and Walker Park.

Volunteers at work clearing paths

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Litter picking
Wherever the volunteers go to do some work, we always take some litter pickers and black bags with us so that we can make sure that the area is clear of litter. During the summer the parks are busier and so there is more litter. We try to ensure that the area around Coleman's Field is kept clear as well as the picnic area.

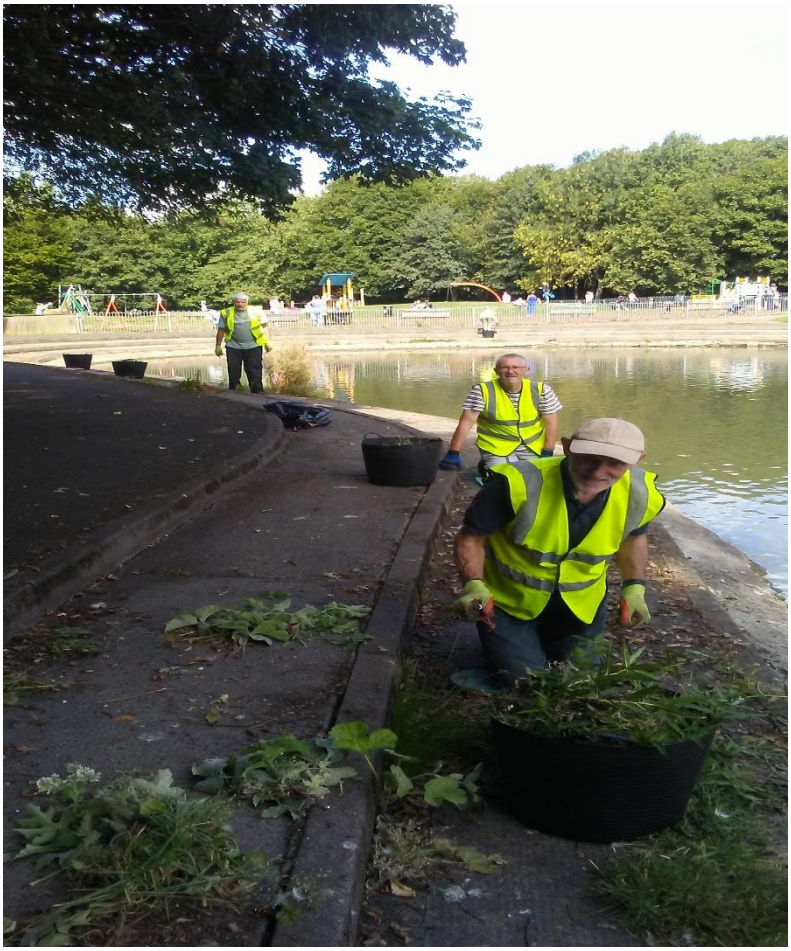
Mending fences
Occasionally fences in the parks become damaged, either through vandalism or careless drivers. The wooden fence supports can also become rotten and require replacing. In such cases the Volunteer Rangers carry out repairs. This may involve replacing one or two palings or may involve installing a new fence support with a concrete base. Two recent fence repairs were the fence in Paddy Freeman's car park which had been knocked over and the fence behind Fisherman's Lodge which had some palings missing.

Graffiti and litter bins
Some areas suffer from graffiti, one of these being the shelter next to the picnic area. The Volunteer Rangers make every effort to remove these when they appear using graffiti wipes and other means. Notice boards, benches and litter bins also receive their share of graffiti. Another problem is the occasional fire in litter bins which causes the painted metal surface of the bin to be discoloured. In such cases the Volunteer Rangers repaint the bins with black metallic paint.

Freshly painted litter bin

Painting handrails and benches
Several of the metal handrails at the bottom end of the Dene were beginning to become chipped and shabby. Some of the volunteers have rubbed them down and re-painted them with metallic paint. In addition, some of the benches have begun a to look shabby. In such cases the volunteers have repainted them.

Boating lake in Paddy Freemans
Every summer the concrete surround of the boating lake in Paddy Freemans becomes festooned with weeds. The problem is caused by the large gaps in the concrete in which seeds collect and sprout. The volunteer rangers usually devote one or two sessions on their hands and knees pulling up all the weeds.



Nature Area
The Nature Area, across the river from Pets' Corner, needs occasional attention, especially prior to visits from children for dipping sessions. The paths need weeding and cutting back. Weeds need to be raked from the pond and grass paths need to be mowed across the wild-flower meadow.

Hillside area next to the Nature Area
A couple of years ago year the Rangers arranged for several trees to be removed from this area to open it up and to allow smaller native trees to be planted. The area was covered in substantial patches of brambles and so, a number of sessions have involved the laborious task of digging up the brambles and preventing them from coming back. This year the Volunteer Rangers had a couple of sessions in which they planted bulbs of wild flowers and some small saplings.

Apple trees in Coleman's Field
A while ago there was a planting session in which a group of school children planted apple trees in Coleman's Field. During this hot, dry summer some of the Volunteer Rangers have kept the young trees watered to prevent them from drying out.

Heaton Park
On some Saturday mornings the Friends of Heaton Park meet to do tidy up work in the park. Some of the Volunteers from Jesmond Dene go along to help.

Walker Riverside Park and Hadrian's Way
The Volunteer Rangers often have sessions in Walker Riverside Park and along the paths of Hadrian's Way. Because this foot and cycle path is much used by visitors to the region, it is important that is kept in a decent condition, with litter removed and vegetation cut back.

Havannah and Big Waters Nature Reserves
The Volunteer Rangers often have sessions at the two nature reserves to the north-east of the city. The work involves maintaining the woodland and heath areas in a condition to benefit the wildlife. Occasionally, walkways and fences need to be repaired.

Planted areas near the Visitor's Centre
One of the Volunteer Rangers (Cath) spends a great deal of time maintaining the areas on the approach to the Visitor's Centre. These comprise the large sloping area opposite the turning circle, the triangular trough opposite Coleman's Field and the flower bed outside the Visitors Centre. She supplies the plants herself and spends a considerable time weeding and keeping everything looking neat. As this is the first part of the Dene many visitors see, the maintenance of these beds is very important.

Plant stall
The Volunteer Rangers run a plant stall at the Armstrong Bridge Market which is held every month. Plants are provided by volunteers to be sold, providing money for the Volunteer funds. The stall also provides publicity leaflets about Friends of Jesmond Dene and about coming events in the Dene. We're always hopeful that we might encounter one or two new volunteers among the people who visit the stall.

. **Dave Poste** FOJD and Volunteer Ranger

Please see up to date activities and events on the FOJD Facebook page or webpage http://www.jesmondDene.org.uk

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.

FOJD Committee list:

Chair	Clive Gerrard
Treasurer	Jacki Holmes
Secretary	Sue Stokel-Walker
Members	Geoffrey Carter, John Blakemore, Robert Brandt
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

Patron **John Grundy**

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