



www.ryemeadows.org.uk

## Rye Meadows Newsletter – No. 6

So much has happened and will be happening on and to do with Rye Meadows, we thought another Newsletter was due.

### Volunteers

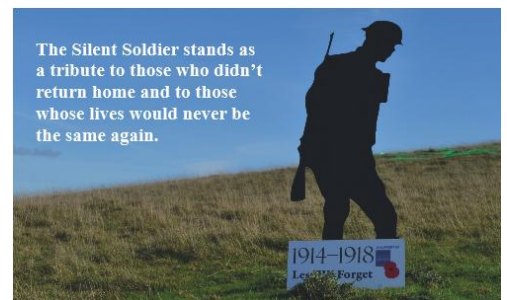
We now have a panel of 22 volunteers who help out on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Of course not everyone comes along each time because we all have other commitments and holidays. However without the help of these intrepid volunteers we couldn't achieve anything like we do. We are also grateful to the wives and husbands of the volunteers for allowing them out for the day – though I suspect many are pleased to get them out from under their feet for a while! Some though do bake for us and sometimes at coffee break we all enjoy a slice of cake or a bun cooked by a wife or a Mother-in-Law.



Although we have a good number of volunteers, we are always open to more coming along. There's no commitment, just come along when you can. Voluntary work days are the key to maintaining the Meadows. This includes the maintenance of the Brook, clearing ditches, pulling Himalayan Balsam, which we have almost eradicated, care of footpaths, bonfires and much more. No special skills are required as long as you are happy with mud, brambles, soot, backache etc. you'll be welcome. We meet at the new barn at the top of Footpath 596 from Fairholme Crescent at 9.30am and usually work through to 1pm – except for a tea/coffee break. If you'd like more information just email David at [rmadmin@ryemeadows.org.uk](mailto:rmadmin@ryemeadows.org.uk).

### “Silent Soldier”

This year being the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the cessation of hostilities in the Great War we were pleased to mark the occasion with our own Silent Soldier in the Centenary Field. These memorial fields were an idea of Fields in Trust supported by HRH Prince William, Duke of Cambridge and we were pleased to be able to contribute to this nationwide initiative. Opened in May 2017 it also helped us thank the many sponsors who have supported our efforts across the Rye Meadows who include, A Plant, Thames Water, The Barnby Trust, MVDC and the Community Foundation for Surrey.



## **New fencing and new hedges**

You may recall from the previous Newsletter that we announced the planting of 750 new hedging plants in a field to the north of Centenary Field we now call Fraudings Marsh. The planting was to be carried out over two weekends and the first one was dry and sunny and volunteers and residents planted 500 plants. The following weekend we had snow and the planting was postponed with the remaining hedging planted by volunteers on the next Tuesday. The thaw made the clay soil very wet and heavy but we managed to get them all in, though our boots and wellingtons were caked in clay. We didn't anticipate the summer following the planting being one of the driest on record and though many survived the drought we will have lost some. Next spring will show us the casualty rate and how many we will need to replace.

We have now excavated a trench the length of the fence to the south of Tomletts field and will be planting more new hedges there this winter. We will again be asking for volunteers from Friends of Rye Meadows to help plant another 500+ hedging saplings.

## **Grants**

We successfully applied for a Grant from Mole Valley District Council's Infrastructure Levy pot to supply power to the new barn, plus to purchase and install a composting toilet. The former will allow us to use electrical power to sharpen tools in the barn, charge batteries for the two tractors and make the all important tea and coffee. We excavated a trench to the barn from where the new supply was being installed and took the opportunity of adding a water supply pipe. An appeal for plumbing saw us get a sink and tap from a car boot sale and a cupboard from a resident (thanks Brian!). Usefully, one of the volunteers is a retired plumber and we hope to have this all in place soon. Light, heat, water and a toilet will help us fulfil a long held wish to invite local schools to visit the site. We are very grateful to MVDC and in particular Rod Shaw for their support in this venture.

## **U3A, Heritage Week and River Mole Discovery Day**

Following the success of Heritage Day 2017 we were invited to speak to Banstead U3A. David B, David C, Nigel and Allan gave a 40 minute presentation which was very well received, and a generous donation was made to Rye Meadows funds.



On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2018 between 11am and 3pm we again opened up the whole of Rye Meadows to visitors as part of Heritage Week. This time we commenced the visit in Centenary Field and people were able to explore all the meadows.

We had a number of visitors this year and the exercise was successful. We hope to do the same in 2019.

We also contributed to the River Mole Discovery Day on 30<sup>th</sup> September where members of the River Mole Catchment Partnership were present. This annual event takes place on the banks of the River Mole at Leatherhead and together with Rye Meadows, there were stands from the Environment Agency, South East Rivers Trust, British Canoeing, Leatherhead Angling Society and Teazle Wood.

## Fund Raising

Although we receive very generous support from A Plant who supply the necessary heavy equipment when needed, we have no other regular income and all our endeavours have to be supported by donations and grants. George and Daphne Burnett as landowners have supported us financially over the years and without their support we could not achieve all we do. Diesel, petrol, insurance and numerous other regular costs have to be covered. Rye Meadows continue to apply for grants from various sources, successfully in some cases but receiving a “We regret” letter in many others. Underpinning our efforts is a “trickle feed” of money coming from Easyfundraising.

How do we raise funds for Rye Meadows from Easyfundraising? This is a web site you visit as a conduit through to hundreds of internet buying sites from well known ones like Amazon or Argos, to little known specialist ones. The system works like this. You register your interest by visiting [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and choosing the charity/organisation you want to support. In our case just enter “Friends of Rye Meadows” in the Search box. Once taken to our page you click “Support this cause”. This prompts you to “Create an Account” and you can continue using Facebook or by email.

Once registered you then, via this site, visit the retailer you want to use for your internet purchase. Common ones are shown, but you can use the Search box to look for a retailer. It is surprising how many retailers are party to the scheme. Click the retailer and you are taken to their web site where you choose your purchases and buy them as normal. Once your transaction is finished, the retailer then makes a donation to Easyfundraising for your chosen charity i.e. us! **This costs you nothing at all**, but the retailer makes a donation on your behalf. It might amount to pence only, but it all adds up. So far we have raised over £800 by our Friends using this method to do their internet shopping.

Also on the Easyfundraising site is an App you can download. This extension to your browser reminds you whenever you visit a web site that’s affiliated to Easyfundraising. You get a pop-up asking you if you want to contribute via Easyfundraising and clicking “Yes” will ensure that any subsequent purchase generates funds for us; again at no cost to you.

## Photographs, Notelet Cards, Mugs and Pictures



We are supported by local Leatherhead artist and author, Cathy Brett. ([www.cathybrett.co.uk](http://www.cathybrett.co.uk)) Cathy has produced paintings of Rye Meadows which have been used to produce packs of Notelets. These were on sale at Ashtead Village Day, Heritage Day and the River Mole Discovery Day.



We are now in the throes of producing Rye Meadows mugs and we will be advising all the Friends shortly how they can buy them. The profits from the sale of cards and the mugs will go to Rye Meadows funds.



Finally a Rye Meadows book is planned with contributions from all the volunteers. The book will be around 200 pages (soft or hard cover) divided into 12 chapters – January to December - each with 1, 2, 3 or 4 ‘articles’ that refer to activities or experiences in Rye Meadows during that month. These could be:

Short stories, prose pieces, comedy pieces, personal reflections/diaries, recipes, poems, surveys or scientific observations, fiction, biography, history... actually, just about anything as long as it's inspired by Ashted Rye Meadows.

From everyone at Rye Meadows, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

David (Chairman)