



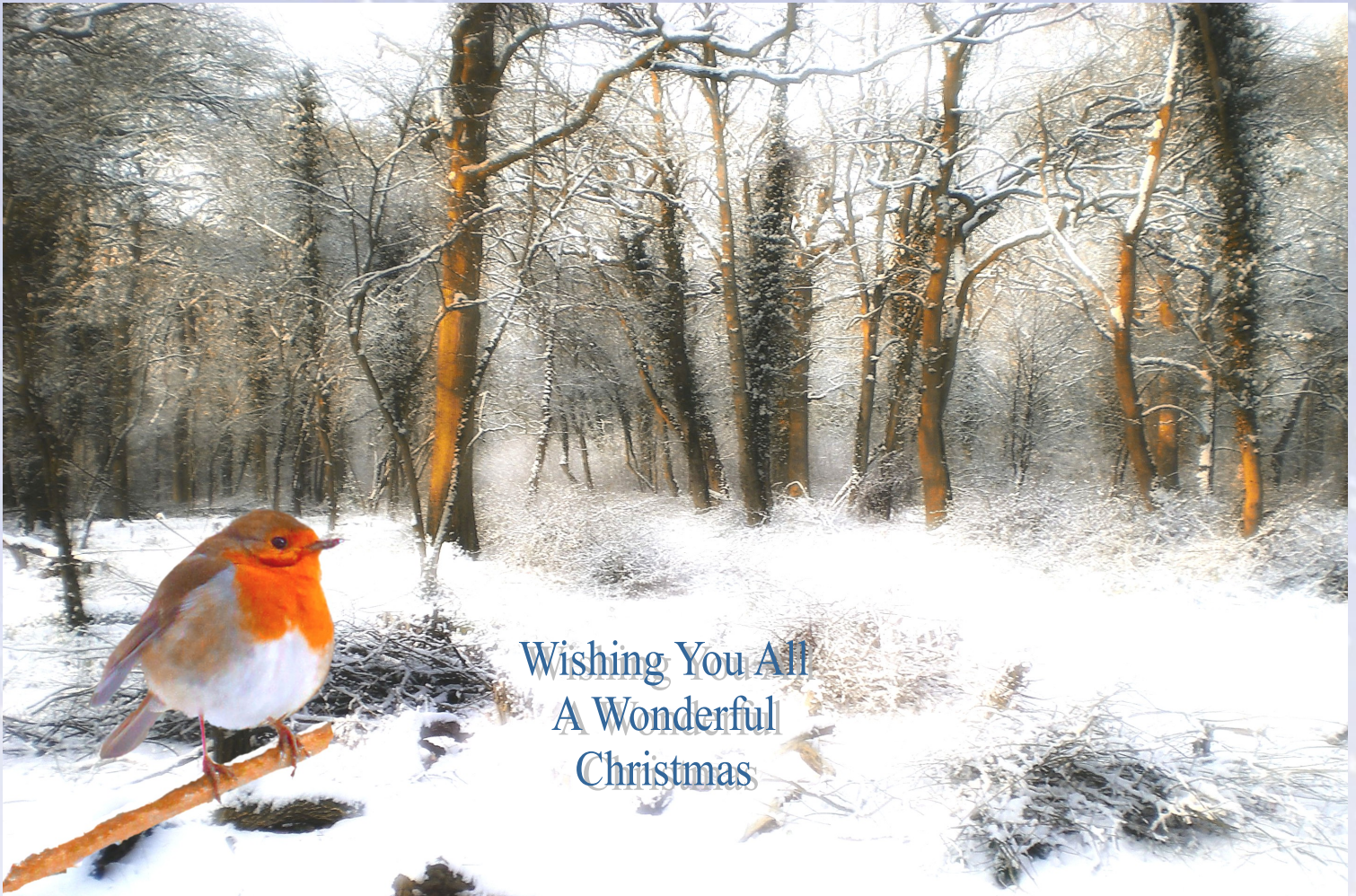
The Friends Of

Putnoe Wood & Mowsbury Hillfort



Newsletter

Christmas/Winter 2015



Wishing You All
A Wonderful
Christmas

So long, farewell, au revoir, auf wiedersehen

Unhappily at the end of December we are to say goodbye to two of our Bedford Borough colleagues Jane Moore and Ed Burnett due to redundancy. They have been two of our inspirational shining lights since our beginnings five years ago. Without their guidance, support and friendship we would not have evolved into what we are today. To lose Jane and Ed as well as Larissa two years ago comes as a real blow and now leaves the Rangers, posh description, Country Park Guardians with just a skeleton crew. We can only hope that even with the latest Borough budget cuts we will still be able to continue our work. By the way your local Bedford MP voted for these savage Government cuts to local councils funding and these cuts will run deep so do not shoot the messengers.



Bedford Local Plan 2032

The consultation on Bedford's Local Plan ended on the 14th December. If you managed to wade through the consultation documentation on the Borough's website you would be aware that there were several submitted sites which would adversely effect the Renhold Green Corridor and local communities.

We have been informed that all of the submitted sites will be appraised by planning officers, the consultation responses will need to be considered and proposed allocations of sites to meet the Borough's development needs will be drawn up for inclusion in a 'pre-submission' consultation version of the Local Plan. This is timetabled to be approved and published for consultation in autumn 2016.



Chairman: *Andy Wilkins* Secretary: *Helen Wilkie* Treasurer: *John Wilkie* Events and Tasks Coordinator: *John Wallace*

New Monmouth Bench



A new oak bench manufactured by Celtic Forest of Swansea was installed in October. The bespoke Monmouth oak bench was positioned at the top of Mowsbury Hill Meadow where there is wide ranging views over Putnoe Wood, Bedford and beyond. Our thanks to Councillors Charlie Royden and Wendy Rider for their ward funding.

Hit Me With Your Rhythm Sticks



The rain held off for Hemlock Morris as they set forth on their quest to hunt down the rhythm sticks in Putnoe Wood. Ranger Jon even laid down a smoke screen with the Kelly kettle to aid their efforts. Looking forward to meeting them again at Mowsbury Hillfort for Wassail 2016 in January.

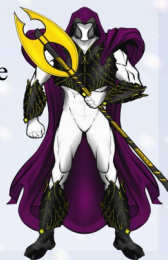
Summer and Winter Notelets



The summer and winter scenic notelets of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort have been a great success. If you would like a couple of packs before they run out please get in touch. All proceeds go to supporting our work at both sites.

All Change

The new Parks Management structure: Bjorn Hove is now the Safe and Green Infrastructure Officer and has taken over responsibility for volunteering as well as still being responsible for events. James Lynch has taken on the responsibilities of Senior Team Leader (Safe & Green) and will be the Rangers (Country Park Guardians) new manager from 1st January 2016. The other new Country Park Guardians are Nicola Monsey, Janet Munro, Richard Dowsett and of course our very own likely lads Jon Bishop and Danny Fellman. We look forward to working with them in the future. As a protest against bureaucratic language perhaps we can call the Rangers, well how about Rangers?



Pottery Sherds



St Neots type , Shelly Ware.



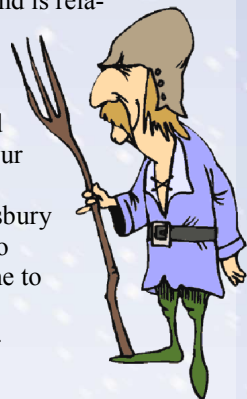
Iron Age

Two pottery sherds, St Neots type shelly ware and an Iron Age pot sherd that were found at Mowsbury Hillfort, are held at The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum, Bedford. With their kind permission they have been reproduced with other found artefacts on our website.

The St Neots type shelly ware is from about the 12th century. It is a base sherd from a large, wheel thrown, vessel. Possibly a cooking pot or a jar. The base of the pot would probably have been up to 10 inches across. It is not too abraded and is relatively fresh looking.

The Iron Age pot sherd is possibly a base sherd from a handmade domestic pot. It is reasonably well made and tempered with sand or quartz. The internal surface is black in colour from firing. The external surface is grey.

If you have images of artifacts found at Mowsbury Hillfort or Putnoe Wood we would be only too pleased to add them to our gallery for everyone to share. For further images check out: www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk/artifact-finds.html



Badger Cull

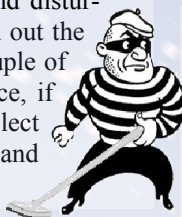


The Badger Trust, an animal welfare charity, asked the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs for their cost benefit analysis of cull pilots undertaken in 2013 and 2014. Defra is arguing that it is in the public interest" not to release the information to the public. Where have we heard this before! Would it be "Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting on the grounds that an item of business is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act. This act gives the opportunity for Committee members to decide if it is in the public interest to hold the item in closed session. It would appear that when the going gets tough openness and transparency goes out of the window.

Absolutely NOT!



An absolute NO NO! Mowsbury Hillfort is a Scheduled Monument. It is a criminal offence to demolish, destroy, damage, remove, repair, alter or use a metal detector on the site of a Scheduled Monument or to remove objects of archaeological or historic interest from site that have been discovered though the use of such equipment. Even an authorized volunteer group like ourselves have to jump through hoops before we can take on ground disturbance of any kind. So to the perpetrators that carried out the metal detecting and shallow digging over the last couple of days at the Hillfort, it has been reported to the police, if caught you can probably expect a fine and we could elect to have you pilloried and maybe then hung drawn and quartered.



Making Hay



October turned out to be a very wet month which caused us problems initially with getting Mowsbury Hill Meadow cut and collected and then brush cut and rake the Hillfort ramparts.



But with a little surgery and tender care from our nursing team all ended well and we can leave the meadow to its autumn slumber.



Tasks, Activities and Friends Meetings

www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk
Mobile site: www.pwmhfriends.com
www.facebook.com/putnoemowsburyfriends
Email: contact@putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk
www.no-more-bricks.com





“Raindrops keep fallin' on my head But that doesn't mean my eyes will soon be turning red. Crying's not for me. Cause I ain't gonna stop the rain by complaining. Because I'm free. Nothing's bothering me.”

First task of the day was to clear a fallen tree on the northern perimeter path then we set to on the coppicing. There might have been a lull from the predicted wind but by George it did not half rain.



Even a few gurning choruses of Rain Drops Keep Fallin, did not really lift the spirits and the soggy chocolate biscuits did not help either. By tea time everyone was soaked to the skin but nobody wanted to be the first to call it a day so we stayed the course and was at least rewarded on the trudge home by blue skies and a warm setting sun.



(C) La La La La Laaa (C7)La La La La La,La La La La Laaa!



The Friends of
**Putnoe Wood
& Mowsbury Hillfort**

Invite you to the

WINTER WASSAIL

IN THE ORCHARD AT MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Tuesday 19th JANUARY 2016

Come & join us in the ancient custom of Wassailing...
In the company of the local Hemlock and Redbornstoke
Morris Dancers we will share a traditional wassail ceremony.
Hot apple juice will be served to keep everyone warm!
Meeting point:
Mowsbury Golf Club Car Park at 7.15pm for 7.30pm start.

Booking essential as places are limited.
Priory Rangers 01234 211182
prioryrangers@bedford.gov.uk



Bedford Borough Council

Please note this is an outdoor event so wear warm clothes and sturdy shoes.
Bring a torch to light your way! and something to bash to help make a noise and awaken the spirits!
Parking available in the golf club car park
Everyone welcome but booking is essential as places are limited. This event is Free Of Charge but a donation of £2.00 would be welcome to cover refreshments.
For more information about Morris Dancing, please visit:
www.hemlockmorris.com

Anyone for a paddle



The warm-up routine for the coppicing task in Putnoe Wood was a little head butting practice, nice one Sue I bet Helen did not expect that one and the boys did not make much head way on the tree. Sometimes our tasks evoke a sense of calm like swans gliding across a moon lit pond but be assured our little legs are paddling like hell beneath the surface.