



DAWNAY ESTATES NEWSLETTER

Tenth Edition

www.dawnay.co.uk Summer 2006

Welcome to our June Newsletter

This issue of the Newsletter marks the end of John Nellist's 35 year stewardship of the Wykeham shoot. As such there can be no better way of introducing this edition than wishing him a long and happy retirement.

Viscount Downe

It's a good hoss that never stumbles and a good wife that never grumbles.

Traditional Yorkshire saying

John Nellist – 35 years keeping at Wykeham



John Nellist has recently retired after giving 35 years dedicated service to the Abbey Shoot at Wykeham. Olive too has made a large contribution since John took over as sole keeper following Gordon Summerson's retirement in 1993.

John had worked for two Rabbit Clearance Societies (York and Scarborough) before being asked to join Steve Nesfield as a keeper at Wykeham in 1971. In the early days rearing involved collecting 600 eggs and putting them under bantam hens; a far cry from rearing 8,000 birds from day olds

every year. Vermin control was an essential ingredient in those early years in ensuring that the syndicate could enjoy their six 120 bird days.

For a long time the shoot was divided into two beats – woe betide any adventurous poaching on each others beats – and John recalls the competition between the two keepers; inevitably he always claimed the larger number of birds shot!

John offered the guns and many syndicates a friendly welcome on each shoot day and developed the Abbey Shoot as one of the most friendly shoots in Yorkshire. His shrewd understanding of the guns capability and management of the drives ensured a happy customer having had his (or her!) share of the birds. In his final years the Abbey Shoot was offering 50 days shooting with an outstanding 70% return.

Following their extremely well attended retirement party, at which they were presented with a painting by Linda Raw, John and Olive have moved to Ruston. In the meantime Matthew Steadman has been employed as the new Head Keeper (with a helping hand from John, hence the only partial retirement). Matthew was previously the senior beat keeper at the Deer Park beat at the Helmsley shoot (Duncombe Park).

The two shoots at Wykeham are now being merged over two years, and Matthew's excitement at the challenge of developing the two shoots is very obvious! Bedale and Yedmandale have the potential for offering high birds and the undulating ground north of the A170 is ideal for partridge.

The new shoot will continue to offer days to syndicates, companies and individuals with a variety of shooting on offer to include high birds, traditional low ground shooting or mixed days, under the supervision of Matthew Steadman and a continuing friendly welcome from John Nellist.

Welcome to...

Matthew Steadman, who joins us as Head Keeper at Wykeham, together with his wife Carol, and their three children.



Mark Stanhope, who has joined the building maintenance team.

David & Christine Fairburn who have joined St Helens Caravan Park as seasonal wardens.

Welcome back to...

Emma Welbourn and Emma Hepples who have both returned from maternity leave, and are job sharing as Robert Sword's PA, whilst juggling other roles such as Newsletter Editor!

Goodbye to....

Gill Raw who has completed her temporary contract as Robert Sword's PA at the Estate Office

Congratulations to . . .

Michael Marshall, accountant, and Jane Kenworthy who were married on 19 May.

I want to go back to Yorkshire and the Wolds, and the smell of tarred ropes and wool, and horses in the dark barns there, and the granaries full of sliding gold and smelling of dust, the sloping field, and the slow-speaking shrewd workers.

Winifred Holtby

Activities on the Estates

Wykeham Lakes – One Year On, as a joint venture with the Dawnay Estates



Not being a great fan of Roller Coasters, I have often wondered what all the excitement was about. Over the last 12 months I've found out – my feet haven't touched the ground!

On the downside a variety of 'countryside predators' namely, cormorants, otters, mink and herons have all tested my patience to the limit. Obviously they all have one thing in common – they eat fish! The damage over winter amounted to £10,000 worth of fish. Since then, electrified fencing has been erected by the Estate around the Carp and Match lakes which will hopefully reduce further losses.

On a more positive note, the lakes have been restocked with approximately 4000lb of coarse fish; a much needed boost creating a lot of interest by the local angling community. I have recently seen match weights of over 100lb of fish winning a 5-hour competition.

The trout fishing has been spectacular with both the Trout and Causeway lakes producing great results. Some anglers have caught over 25 fish per session, and individual fish weighing 12lb 5oz. The combination of location, water quality and good brown, rainbow and blue trout, ensure our customers keep returning for more.

A significant amount of work has been carried out improving fishing platforms, car parks, paths, fencing and landscaping, adding to the overall appeal of the Lakes. However there is no room for complacency with further improvements planned during 2006.

Overall the first 12 months have been a challenge, with some steep learning curves along the way, coupled with extremely long hours, poor pay and little time off.... Am I Happy? – You bet!!!

As a final note, my wife Lyn and son Paul will soon be joining me on a permanent basis having sold our house in Devon.
Mike Heelis, www.wykehamlakes.co.uk

Douglas Fir and Forestry

Douglas Fir, or to give it its proper name *Pseudotsuga Taxifolia* has probably been grown in Bedale Valley at Wykeham since it was first commercially available in England following its introduction in 1827 by David Douglas.



Douglas Fir originates from the West coast of America where it grows from British Columbia in the north down to Mexico in the south. Its common name in the USA is Oregon Pine.

Douglas Fir grows best in the wetter west side of the United Kingdom but it will also grow well on the east of the lower valley slopes and bottoms with moderate to good deep well-drained soils. Douglas Fir is the United Kingdom's tallest tree with the largest specimen being recorded at 64 m high (210 feet) in Reelig Glen, north of Inverness. Wykeham's tallest trees are also Douglas Fir but they are not quite at the same height due to lower rainfall on the east coast. Those at Bedale are estimated to be a mere 145 feet high with a circumference of 11 ½ feet.

The firs were planted around the 1870's and on the 1942 Forestry Plan they are already noted as being 'big Douglas!' The Estate also has smaller specimens, however these were still big enough to be used as the poles for the Yorkshire Show Pole Climbing competition and were felled to leave at least 100 feet of clear stem. The remaining trees will be grown on to make saw logs for the building industry for which there is a premium price. Douglas Fir is also valued for quality veneer and joinery. They will be planted where possible for the foreseeable future, and who knows with global warming, we may be able to cultivate Britain's tallest tree at Wykeham with only 65 feet to go!

Never ask a man if he's from Yorkshire. If he is he'll tell you anyway. If he's not you'll only embarrass him.

Traditional Yorkshire saying

Farming Succession

The Dawnay Estates is one of the few Estates which continues the tradition of a half yearly rent audit followed by a dinner. Invitations are restricted to the current tenant farmers and the venue alternates between the Old Kitchen at Wykeham Abbey and the Court Room at Danby Castle.

The occasion is an important meeting place between the Estate Managers and farmers to discuss current problems (not to mention the Single Farm payment, or the lack of it!), and opportunities, as well as having a very fine lunch.

Those attending have changed considerably over the past ten years as the older generation have retired and in most instances the farm occupation has continued in the same family. Of the existing tenant farms, (which includes two new holdings at Wykeham,) over 50% have been taken over by the next generation, of which 45% of the successors are deriving a large percentage of their income outside direct farming.

The Estate continues with a policy of retaining individual farm holdings and fostering a farming community but at the same time encouraging tenants to diversify in order to maintain and enhance their standard of living. It is pleasing to see the succession taking place on those same family farms even though this change is very often accompanied by a diversification of the traditional farming base.



Activities on the Estates

Wykeham Mature Plants



Another busy season for Wykeham Mature Plants speeds to a close and I wonder where the time has gone; it doesn't seem five minutes since the last newsletter.

So what exciting events have kept us so busy? Perhaps the biggest project has been the supplying and planting of an avenue of eighty Lime trees for a private school with a brief to create an immediate impact. The Limes are some of the largest trees Wykeham have ever grown and lifted, with a girth of about fifty centimetres (about as thick as your thigh!), standing seven to eight metres tall and each weighing about two tons!

The exercise created a steep learning curve for all of us. A special root balling machine had to be hired to lift the trees. Four men and the machine were only able to lift ten trees a day and left holes of 160 centimetres diameter for the unwary.

Once the trees had been delivered to site (with only eight trees to a very full articulated lorry) the fun really began. These monsters had to be planted to create an avenue leading to a new building. Fortunately the planting gang managed to avoid a four inch high pressure water main and numerous underground electrical cables whilst guying the trees, all in the freezing cold and wet weather of February and March.

The end result has delighted all involved producing a truly impressive avenue, as is evidenced by the photograph.

Immediately the Lime tree avenue was completed two further large projects were undertaken to provide instant screens of Leylandii using over 450 plants from 3.5 to 5 metres tall. The nursery has earned a reputation as the Leylandii Kings by the Italian suppliers!

The resulting screens have proved to be very effective and added to the reputation of supplying a quality solution to difficult problems.

A mature planting solution is only a phone call away.

Adam Smith, 01723 862406 www.wykehammatureplants.co.uk



Expansion at Wykeham Business Centre

AWBS is Europe's leading supplier of pre-engineered steel frame building packages and with offices throughout the world offers a truly international service to its clients.

AWBS supplies steel frames for industrial and commercial buildings to the construction industry worldwide as pre-engineered integrated building packages. The client list includes some of the top names in Europe and indeed the world (Tesco, RIMI, P&G, American Standard, IKEA, Toyota, Cargill, Coca-Cola, IBM, Bechtel, Kajima, Bovis, Hochtief, Flour Daniel) as well as numerous smaller local businesses.



When AWBS became independent of its former parent company, Atlas Ward Structures Limited in Sherburn, a new office and headquarters were called for. The requirement was for suitable modern facilities with car parking and easy access to Scarborough and York – for onward travel to London and the major airports, Heathrow, Manchester, Leeds/Bradford and Stansted.

Greg Tulloch says "The rural setting, the open-plan offices and the positioning around two landscaped courtyards fitted the requirements exactly for a modern and relaxed working environment."

Building on its first independent year, and having won several large projects in Iceland, in particular the structural steel for the extension to the passenger terminal at Iceland's main international airport at Reflavik, AWBS needed to take on more staff and expand. Having a second neighbouring unit available on site meant that this expansion could take place easily, with Dawnay Estates altering the building to meet their requirements.

AWBS is now ideally placed for the future in a modern office with a traditional setting. Indeed two recent visitors from Iceland and Lithuania both commented on the wonderful office environment and how they envied the AWBS staff!

I am never at my best in the early morning, especially a cold morning in the Yorkshire spring with a piercing March wind sweeping down from the fells, finding its way inside my clothing, nipping at my nose and ears.

James Herriot

SEASONS
fine food & wines

Congratulations to Seasons, who have their distribution and administration centre in the Farfield complex and are celebrating their sales outlet expansion. Having been successful with their shop in Pickering, they have opened a new one at the top of Westborough in the centre of Scarborough. The Dawnay Estates wish them every success.

In Our Community

A Dawnay as High Sheriff

Lady Downe has been appointed High Sheriff of the County of North Yorkshire for the forthcoming year. The office stretches back over one thousand years - the High Sheriff being the Monarch's legal agent in each county. Now the responsibilities are more ceremonial in that the Sheriff, as the Queen's representative, escorts High Court Judges who may visit the County during the year, and also offers them hospitality.

Lady Downe is the 6th Dawnay to hold the post in North Yorkshire. The first, Sir John held it twice in both 1572 and then again in 1589, and the last was Mr. Cuthbert Dawnay of West Heslerton in 1949.



The uniform of the Sheriff changed over the last century, with chain mail and broad swords no longer in fashion; Lady High Sheriffs are now encouraged to design their own uniforms and Lady Downe was delighted that Justin Terry of Ankaret Cresswell, Ruston, and Jane Weldon of Get Ahead Hats, Snainton were able to make her outfit.

Danby and Jack the Ripper


Historians are a competitive lot. King Edward VII's first son, and next in line to the throne, Prince Albert Victor (known as "Eddy") is the latest person to have his reputation reassessed. It seems strange that, according to Andrew Cook, he is now no longer the "slow", syphilitic corrupt homosexual that we had previously been led to believe. James Pope-Hennessy was wrong when he related Eddy was as "aimless as a gleaming goldfish in a crystal bowl" and his Cambridge tutor was mistaken when he noted his mind was "abnormally dormant".



He is now described as a man with the intelligence of Leonardo de Vinci, the common touch of David Beckham and a wonderful lover to boot (he courted the clinically insane, though gorgeous, future Russian Czarina of Rasputin fame).

One of the stranger myths attaching to Prince Eddy is that he was Jack the Ripper. There may be debate over his morals and intelligence but one may be sure he was not Jack, as when Mary Ann "Polly" Nicols was murdered in the early hours of 31 August 1888, he was in Danby. The Daily News reporting on 8 September "Prince Albert Victor of Wales, who has been the guest ... at Danby Lodge, Grosmont, Yorkshire, during the last ten days, left yesterday...The average bags during the six days' shooting have been 300 brace, with a few snipes, golden plovers, and hares. The weather on the whole has been good, excepting Saturday last, when the rain prevented shooting. His Royal Highness thoroughly enjoyed himself during his stay". Even allowing for the fact that the Railways were probably somewhat more efficient than they are today, the Prince would have been hard put to wonder off after dinner slip down to Whitechapel, murder the young woman and return for breakfast at eight. So perhaps Prince Eddy is not quite as bad as we all thought.

The inevitable report that "Polly" Nicols really was going to retake her "A" levels and wanted to become a lawyer and was likely to go on to become a High Court Judge, can perhaps be treated with the scepticism reserved for all these "victim" stories.

 The Countryside Alliance are hosting an Open Day on the Danby Moors on Sunday 25th June at 2pm. The public are invited to come and find out how, and why the moors are managed. The event is to include a two hour moorland walk with talks and demonstrations on hill sheep farming, game keeping and grouse shooting, heather burning, open access and dog walking and grouse tasting! For further information and to book a place, contact Pat Colton or Tim Baynes at the Countryside Alliance 01833 695749 or email enquiries@moorland-open-days.co.uk

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Please send me your news and photographs for the next newsletter by Sept. 2006

Wanted – Damsels in Distress

Matthew Noble, Estate Bailiff, and David Edwards, Farm Manager, Farmcare, require distressed victims to practice their newly acquired hill rescue skills (damsels are preferred, but in these days of equality they have promised to do the right thing and respond to all in need).

Having successfully passed the necessary skill assessments, Matthew and David are now trainee members of the Snainton based, North York Moors Search and Rescue Team. They will be fully fledged members after their year's traineeship when they will unashamedly compete to drive the emergency Landrover flashing the Blues and Twos!

The new trainees' rescue rucksacks will be permanently packed ready to be grabbed at a moment's notice to meet at any rendezvous point on the North York Moors or East Yorkshire, within an hour of an emergency alert. The Team works closely with Police and Coastguard services as well as their colleagues from the Cleveland branch – any of us, male and female may need their skills so we thank them in advance for their time and courage.

