



# DAWNAY ESTATES NEWSLETTER

Seventh Edition  
Spring 2005

[www.dawnay.co.uk](http://www.dawnay.co.uk)

## Welcome to our Spring Newsletter

The Estate is very proud to have been chosen as the site for one of the woods which are being established to mark the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar. The project is being co-ordinated by the Woodland Trust and each of the woods will be named after one of the 27 ships in Lord Nelson's fleet. Wykeham has been chosen as the site for Revenge wood - in part because her captain, Robert Moorsom, was a Whitby man. HMS Revenge is one of the most illustrious names in the history of the Royal Navy, being Sir Francis Drake's flagship during the Armada battles, Sir Richard Grenville's command when he single handedly took on the Spanish fleet in the Azores and latterly being present at the Battle of Jutland and one of Britain's nuclear submarines.

By the time you read this Mike Hellis should have taken over the management of the Wykeham Lakes under a joint venture agreement with the Estate. I am confident the recent investment in the Lakes along with Mike's knowledge of the sport and the industry will mean that we can build on the improvements of recent years.

I would also like to commend the obituary of Geoff Stockhill to everyone. Geoff was the long term Head Gardener at the Abbey. My own first memories of him are trying to avoid his vigilant (and benevolent) gaze as I tried to liberate apples and strawberries as a four year old. Geoff will be sadly missed.

*The Viscount Downe*

## Goodbye to...

Emma Hepples who has started maternity leave and is expecting a baby (their first) in June.

## Welcome to...

Carolyn Jackson who has taken over Emma's work as Business Centre Manager and Editor of this newsletter.

Julie & Dave Roach, seasonal wardens at St Helens Caravan Park

Lyn & Dave Griffiths, new caretakers at The Estate Office

Mike & Lyn Heelis at Wykeham Lakes – more on this inside



## Geoff Stockhill 1923 – 2005

Geoff was born in 1923 in Ruston to Ted & Renee Stockill and he grew up in Brompton where he and his brother Roy attended the local school. He spent all of his school holidays with his Grandfather Henry Megson who was head Gardener at Gallows Hill, Wykeham. He loved it there and had the run of the place. At the age of 14, he started as garden boy at Wykeham Abbey earning 12s 6p a week.

During the war Geoff joined the Home Guard and with his friend Hedley Stirk became a member of the Royal Observer Corps. In 1944 he returned to Wykeham Abbey, where he met Annie, a kitchen maid. They were married in 1948, first living in Ruston where John was born (he had cerebral palsy), and then in Wykeham where Sandra was born. Geoff was made Head Gardener at the Abbey in 1972 and retired in 1988, but he continued to work part time in the gardens and tree nursery.

Geoff was a true gardener and countryman. He knew instinctively how to grow plants and care for them. His special interests were alpines. His garden was much admired by all and included beds, terraces and a waterfall; he even constructed his own garden buildings. He was generous and patient with his advice to all.

His gardening took him into related areas to include judging flowers and vegetables at local shows and villages. He grew plants for Helmsley Primary School where his daughter Sandra works. He also served on the Brompton and District Garden Club committee.

He was a staunch Churchman, acting as server and singing tenor in Wykeham Church Choir for 47 years. He rang the bells and served on the PCC.

He was devoted to his family. He and Annie visited John at the Cheshire Home in Alne every fortnight until John died in 1997. He cared for Annie who had Multiple Sclerosis.

Sandra, her husband Neil, and grandson Daniel live in Helmsley. He was especially proud of Daniel taking a keen interest in his school work and sports activities, especially cricket.

Geoff died quite suddenly, a shock to everyone, but thankfully did not suffer a long illness. He will be missed.

## Activities on the Estates

### Wykeham Mature Plants

March saw the usual end of season rush to plant trees before they broke into leaf. This planting season has been particularly busy planting big trees for a wide range of customers, both local authority and private and over a large area from Newcastle to Doncaster.

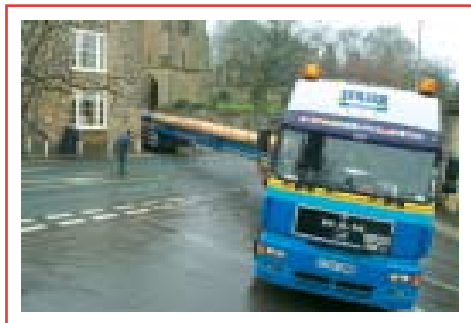
One interesting customer appreciates the instant effect that mature trees can give. To this end he requested an instant hedge of 51 Cupressocyparis X leylandii, 5.5 to 6 metres tall to give him immediate privacy, and two 7 metre tall Chamaecyparis lawsoniana Columnaris Glauca to screen a new staircase!

This was not an easy project as it involved employing a civil engineer to excavate the tree pits, remove the rubbish from site, back fill with top soil and then fit curbs and make good the tarmac edge of the car park. At the same time coordination was required for articulated lorry deliveries to site from Germany and Italy along with heavy unloading gear and planting crews. All this in a very tight working space with builders working alongside. After a weeks hard planting the effect was impressive even by our standards.



### Great Yorkshire Show: Douglas Fir Poles

Two years ago the Estate had some success in the North of England Forestry Competition with some fine Douglas Fir in Bedale. It seems that the judges thought at the time, that should the climbing poles at the Yorkshire Show Ground ever need replacing that there were some excellent specimens and they would ask if the Estate would donate a couple of Firs.



Two years later the call came for two 95ft Douglas Firs, free of knots and as straight as the proverbial arrow. Looking for the trees took rather longer than anticipated, with plenty of “mouthing about” being required. Each tree spotted from the road, which looked suitable, upon reaching it after a marathon climb up what is a very steep bank, revealed dome flaw; not easy to overcome.

With the help of Graham Haddock, (ex. of the Forestry Commission), four trees were felled. Two were immediately dismissed as not being suitable due to flaws or just being too small. A third tree was also found to have shattered at the height of 94ft, leaving the last foot unusable, so another specimen had to be found. The one remaining tree having been de-barked, Ron and Dave, the forestry contractors, then did a great job of choosing another tree, suitably felled with great precision and debarked rather more quickly than the earlier felled tree that nearly took a day to

complete!

A convoy of cranes and escort vehicles, from a firm called Yorkshire Escorts, (try explaining their business card to the missus) plus an artic wagon with a telescopic trailer came to pick up the tree stems. With a considerable amount of skilled manouvering the trees were loaded onto the wagon, ably assisted by Dave, who insisted on being in the thick of the action. The convoy then returned back to the Yorkshire Show Ground, with a brief pause at the Downe Arms as the trailer was steered around the sharp corner onto the A170. The

### Danby Farmer Diversifies

Andrew and Jill Kelly who took over Stonebeck Gate Farm at Fryup nearly ten years ago are expanding their already diversified farming business with the recent decision to take over the tea rooms at the Moors Centre at Danby. The new venture, “The Moors Tea Room” commenced trading before Easter and they are now becoming increasingly busy as the number of visitors to the Moors Centre starts to increase.

The Moors Centre (formerly Danby Lodge) attracts 150,000 visitors and the Kellys through their new venture are therefore well placed to expand their accommodation and catering business.

Andrew Kelly, who is moving towards the establishment of a beef Shorthorn suckler herd is also establishing a meat producers group. Seven members have already signed up to the benchmarking system introduced through the Red Meat Industry Forum. Farmers who can achieve the necessary quality standards and who are looking for better prices for their livestock are being encouraged to join the group. The venture has already attracted the attention of the Mulgrave Estate and a number of their farming tenants have expressed an interest.

### Farfield Workshops

Children and staff from Daisychain Day Nursery, which forms part of Farfield, celebrated the completion of the workshops with an orange squash toast!

Over the last few months the children have watched all the activity on the site with special interest, especially the diggers and the



construction work. There is only slight disappointment that there isn't going to be a Fire Station or a Post Office. A Farfield Open Day held in April generated more new business for the site, securing leases on the last two units!

## Activities on the Estates

### Property – Business homes with a touch of history!

Two unusual houses will be becoming available to let in the coming months.



One is at Danby, and follows the decision by David and Mary Smith to move from Danby Castle Farmhouse to their own home in Danby village. The opportunity to rent Danby Castle Farmhouse comes with four bedrooms, two of which have previously been used for bed and breakfast, an important historic site – with connections with Robert the Bruce and Catherine Parr – together with a view to die for, but also the responsibility for the custodianship of the Castle, Court and Jury Rooms. This responsibility may enable a new occupier to make more use of the Castle as a venue for small and select functions, dinners or events.



The second is at Hutton Buscel village near Scarborough. Manor Farmhouse is a fine late Georgian five bedroom farmhouse together with a large range of stone farmbuildings, a tithe barn, a walled garden (currently in grass) and up to 50 acres of grazing land. The mind boggles, but what an ideal location for combining a home and business, with such possible uses as fruit or vegetable production, equine, offices, very light industry or just a fine house with ample storage!

Both houses will be available later in the year, but enquiries can be made at any time by contacting Emma Welbourn at the Estate Office, Wykeham (01723) 866600).

### All Change on Wykeham Lakes Fishery

On the first of May new faces will appear at Keepers Cottage and at Wykeham Lakes. Mike Heelis, his wife Lyn, and son Paul are the new family taking over the operation of the fishing lakes.

You may have noticed that adverts for the position appeared in many of the sporting journals in the earlier part of the year and Mike and his family were the successful applicants.

Mike is an experienced angler with a background in both coarse and fly fishing. He has also been involved in match fishing for many years, and has held several posts in an assortment of clubs and associations.

Mike and his family currently live in Devon and are making the long trip north to fulfil a long standing desire to run a fishery. Mike was a Royal Marine for several years and so will survive the winter months! Lyn is a hair dresser. Paul is a trained aerial fitter, so we look forward to a good picture in Wykeham!

The fishing at the lakes will, to all intents and purposes, be similar to the previous regime. However, the Estate will not employ Mike and Lyn. There will be a joint venture with St Helens in the Park, whereby both parties can benefit from the new arrangement. The initial agreement is for seven years. They plan to widen the scope of the operation by selling food, bait and fishing tackle from the site.

We look forward to a long and successful relationship, and a new family at



### New Easter Arrivals at St Helens Caravan Park

November last year saw the arrival of the Alpacas and Jacob sheep, which was reported in our winter newsletter. What we didn't know, was that at least two of the sheep were pregnant!

The first we knew, was a report from a dog walker, during the afternoon of the Wednesday before Easter. Without warning a flock of 5 ewes became a flock of 5 ewes and a lamb. A repeat performance took place on the Friday.

The two newcomers, both male, took to life on the Park with great enthusiasm and became the centre of attention over the Easter weekend.

The task of tail removal, and other parts, was left firmly in the hands of the male staff, on the grounds that they would be sympathetic. The girls on the staff are disappointed that no bottle feeding or hand rearing has been necessary.



## In Our Community



### Open Access – Launched on 28 May

The Danby Moors, a Common, will be welcoming thoughtful walkers to enjoy the landscape as Open Access is introduced on the North York Moors from 28 May.

The moors are a managed landscape, mainly for the purposes of grouse but also for grazing of sheep. It is expected therefore that visitors will understand that there are crucial times of the year when the existing extensive footpath system will enable the nesting birds to be left alone. This is even more important as the whole of the Danby Moors are a Special Site of Scientific Interest, particularly for golden plover and merlin. Both these birds benefit largely from the existing moorland management which has been practised by landowners and their keepers for many centuries.

The Estate will be seeking a discretionary ban on dogs and therefore all dogs will only be permitted on the moor if using the public footpaths.

This new “experiment” is an opportunity for owners, managers and visitors to work together in preserving the landscape, but also to enjoy its beauty in a less restrictive manner.

### Barkisland Homes Ltd - Built for the Individual



Working in a relaxed open plan environment in a converted barn at The Hillyard, Wykeham, the team behind Barkisland Homes have, over the years, earned an enviable reputation for building high quality residential properties throughout North Yorkshire. Past developments have spanned the residential and commercial new build and investment markets although Barkisland Homes are currently focused on building properties with the discerning homeowner in mind.

“Whilst creating houses of purpose and character our aim is to exceed market expectations on all levels” explains Company Director Jonathan Gledhill, “detailed attention is given to all aspects of our design and build process and is extended through client requirements, handover and after sales service”.

Current developments include 20 contemporary apartments in York, 10 town centre apartments in Knaresborough, 12 studio flats in Scarborough and most recently 6 vernacular and 2 Victorian style houses close to the centre of Pickering.

More information and details of their current development portfolio can be found at [www.barkislandhomes.co.uk](http://www.barkislandhomes.co.uk)

### News from Wykeham School

Congratulations to Wykeham School who were listed in the Chief inspector of Schools annual report as one of the most effective schools inspected last year. The school is in the top 300 in the country.

A short but busy spring term saw the infant school visit Wykeham Mature Plants to learn about native and imported species of plants. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed their day out. Later they made their own Easter Gardens in biscuit tin lids and these were displayed in Wykeham Church and enjoyed by all.

The school has a new stained glass, wall mounted candle holder, made in memory of Mrs Anne Neal who was a school governor, classroom helper and friend for many years. She sadly died of cancer last year and the school now lights the candle every day during assembly.

The school are collecting Sainsbury & Tesco vouchers and Nestle box tops. There are various collection points around the village including the school, the Estate Office and The Downe Arms.



### All Change at The Downe Arms

The Lease of The Downe Arms has recently has been sold and the Estate is delighted to welcome new leaseholders, Neil & Sue Sands. The new live-in managers and are implementing many changes to all aspects of the Hotel. Sue and Neil previously ran a successful hotel & pub, The Racehorses in Kettlewell. They bring from there not just their own expertise but also a new chef, Simon Cossar, who has already created new and successful menus for both lunch and dinner.

Some of the Estate office staff have been invited to sample the new menus and were favourably impressed by the fresh food policy. Neil and Sue clearly understand how to produce good quality food in comfortable and relaxing surroundings. The future

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Thank you to all who have contributed to this newsletter. Please contact me with your news for the next issue by 15 August