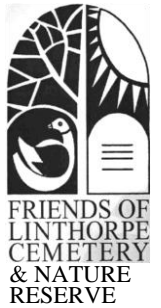


# Spring Newsletter



After a very wet and cold winter spring arrived, but still wet holding back the spring flowers and spring planting.

At the back end of last year a number of the team attended Brushwood and Strimmers course which MEC put on for us, Thanks to Mark Fishpool and Dave Scrivens, this now meant that we were able to use Strimmers in the cemetery. Bereavement Services Operations Manager Ian Campbell soon took the opportunity and provided us with 3 Strimmers which are now being put to good use, working in conjunction with Paul Holmes our Gardener, working in the Nature Reserve area of the cemetery (15 acres).

In May Dr Sue Antrobus and Martin Allen obtained a grant from Tesco which was also complemented by another from Newcastle Building Society to plant and develop a sensory wildflower garden near to the Old Mortuary information building, this work was assisted by TVWLT One Planet Pioneers and of course FoLC&NR members, this is ongoing.

As teambuilding exercises we have days out, this year we have had two up to now, (1) to Washington Wetlands Centre, which we all came away with ideas how to do different jobs and (2) a visit to The National Glass Centre at Sunderland where 16 of us spent the day being educated in a most pleasant atmosphere and had a scrumptious lunch and afternoon tea!

Alongside this we have had different talks happening, River Tees Rediscovered Project, Tees Pilots alongside Groundwork NE, Geoff Taylor a retired Tees Pilot regaled us with his stories; we know that we have 17 ex-pilots residing with us.

This day was researched and supported by Eddie Rutherford, Malcolm Cummins and Ian Stubbs with lunch provided by Linthorpe Tearooms.

Ian Stubbs a local historian as part of Middlesbrough Local History Month has given a number of talks about our residents; Ian is also a FoLC&NR member.

Malcolm Cummins has led one Bat Walk this spring with limited success but well received. We as a group have carried out two bird surveys and one small mammal survey.

Martin Allen, a nationally acclaimed Botanist gave us his now annual wildflower walk which was particularly enlightening seeing we have followed his recommendations and left an area to develop into a spring meadow, what a startling difference in the diversity of the grasses that were there but were never seen. We are looking at leaving a greater area like this next year provided it is a success with the public.

Eddie Rutherford and John Learoyd are often being asked for their assistance in finding actual graves by people doing family research.

So; to sum up life is hectic, busy as the bees, and birds also butterflies, the cemetery is looking good, the membership is growing and from the comments that are received we are doing good.

Thank you to all of the team members for their endeavours, looking forward to the heady days of summer.

Derek Lewis

Chair FoLC&NR