



FRIENDS OF DUNORLAN PARK AUTUMN 2025 NEWSLETTER

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR CHAIR, SIOBHAN

Summer is always busy in Dunorlan Park and the long warm dry spells have seen lots of people enjoying activities in the park. Carolyn and the bird food volunteers have worked extra hard to keep stocks available during the school holidays and weekends. We don't like to disappoint children (or adults) planning to feed the ducks and geese! We would love more volunteers to help with bag-filling. It is a surprisingly therapeutic exercise sitting in the café scooping corn into paper bags and attaching stickers. Carolyn and I are planning to arrange a coffee morning for those interested to show what's involved.

The Friends have run lots of events which have been very well attended and enjoyed by participants. Thank you to Peter, our Events Organiser, for his excellent organisational skills, and to Valerie and Joan for arranging the Model Boat display. We are delighted that we have recruited 19 new members, including 13 family groups, as a result of the events.

TWBC hosted judges from South-and-South-East in Bloom and Britain in Bloom on the terrace at Dunorlan. Thank you to the Parks Team, Tivoli, and the many volunteers working hard to keep the park and town looking great.

Finally, a very special thank you to one of our members, Major David Molloy, who has recently moved away from Tunbridge Wells. He served on the Committee for many years and was the driving force behind the bird food initiative and the lovely camellia garden, as well as the statue in the Temple.

We will miss him being nearby, but will keep in touch.



David, (right), Patricia Short from the International Camellia Society and Peter Russell in the Camellia Garden

KEITH'S FUNGAL FORAY SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18TH

Keith Palmer will lead his annual Fungal Foray, starting at the Undercroft, below the café, at 2pm. This is always a popular event, so Ian Beavis will help out if numbers are high.

To book your place, email Events Organiser Peter on dunorlanfriends@gmail.com or call 01892 531830. Friends' Members free, non-members £2.



A new event for the Friends, **A Walk In The Park** took place in Dunorlan recently and, led by Chair Siobhan and



Events Organiser Peter, was well attended with around 30 people attending on a lovely sunny day.

Leaving from the Undercroft, below the café, it was a gentle stroll of around an hour, in a number of areas of the park, learning the history of the park itself, the original Dunorlan House, the Temple and the statues. The Dancing Lady was stolen from the Greek Temple in October 2006, never to be heard of again. The new statue, Hellis, took up residence in April 2022.



There was also information on the formation of the Friends, the Lottery Grant which led to the park being greatly improved, the boating and other facilities. Stories were related of the Troops who were served afternoon tea at the main house in 1940, with a letter from Mr Collins (maybe Carteret) to Mrs Brown from the Nevill Bakery who provided the delicious food.

Members of the appreciative audience suggested a second event which would

take in the Victoria Cross Grove side of the park and this is being considered for next year.

The Friends hosted a **Pond Dipping** event during June. Fortunately the weather was glorious and pupils from Barnardo's Schools were able to enjoy the event.

Pond dipping is an outdoor event where individuals, usually children, use nets to explore the little creatures living in the shallows of a pond.



Ten children from Barnardo's schools, supervised by adults, spent time catching, looking at, noting and then carefully replacing, any creatures they found. Nothing sensational was caught, but there were a lot of little wriggly things! The event was led by Scott Hudson and a colleague from Kent High Weald Partnership (KHWP) so a big thank you to them for making it so enjoyable.

Meadows Schools, one in Southborough and one in Tunbridge Wells, believe that every child is unique and deserves a personalised education which acknowledges their strengths, challenges and interests. They are proud of their rich history with Barnardo's and are excited to work with their students, parents/carers and community partners to create a future filled with promise and possibility.

The students spend time in the park, when they can, helping out with jobs such as litter-picking and tidying up, which helps the regular staff and volunteers enormously.



Another new Friends' event, the **Model Boats** exhibition recently was a success despite the weather not looking good. It did settle down by lunchtime though so Trev and Phil arranged their stall by the Halls Hole Road jetty. Model RNLI Lifeboats were on show with various items of RNLI kit. One Lifeboat was also given an outing on the lake.

Event organiser Valerie had arranged



yummy cakes and wine, with soft drinks for the children. This was a new event for the Friends and it has already been booked in for July next year when there could be other surprises! Trev travels all around the south of England to raise funds for the RNLI (Royal National Lifeboat Institution), be it to a Lifeboat Station situated on the



coast, or a park! Big thanks to everyone involved with organising the event and we will look forward to next year! If you wanted to find out more about the RNLI, visit www.rnli.org.



FATHER CHRISTMAS IN THE CAFÉ

The Friends have been in touch with Father Christmas who has promised he will be in Dunorlan Park café on Monday, December 22, from 10am to noon.

A charge of £5 per child will be made which will include a chat with Santa and a small gift. Santa will also read a seasonal story.

Santa is very grateful to Ian West for letting him use the café and hopes that parents and children will be treating themselves to a pre-Christmas brunch.

Santa says he has plenty of time to renew his Elf Insurance before December.....

GET YOUR CAMERAS AT THE READY!

Blooming Marvellous Photo Competition 2025



FUNGI AND LICHENS OF OUR PARKS AND WOODLANDS

Fungi and lichens are beautiful and interesting organisms that play a crucial role in woodland ecology. We are looking for photographs capturing fungi and lichens found in our parks and woodlands.

Pictures must be taken this year in gardens, parks and open spaces located within the borough of Tunbridge Wells. The best images will be displayed in town over the winter.

This competition is open for all and will be judged in two categories: children (up to age 18) and adults (18 plus).

Photos can be taken in landscape or portrait, but we require high resolution. To ensure its delivery, please send one image per email. There is a limit of three pictures per person.



Please submit the photos in digital format on email to BloomPhotos@tunbridgewells.gov.uk by Friday 14 November 2025 and include the following information:

- the photographer's name
- title of the image
- location where it was taken
- if the photographer is under 18, please include their age

Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom reserve the right to use winning entries in any promotional publicity. Entered work should not have won any previous competitions.



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**ANDY'S QUARTERLY BIRD SURVEY - AN IMPRESSIVE LIST AS ALWAYS
MANY THANKS ANDY APPLETON**

Grey Heron	Peregrine	Magpie	Wren	Goldfinch
Cormorant	Kestrel	Jay	Blackcap	Greenfinch
Greylag Goose	Woodpigeon	Blue Tit	Chiffchaff	Chaffinch
Canada Goose	Stock Dove	Coal Tit	Blackbird	Lesser Whitethroat
Egyptian Goose	Collared Dove	Great Tit	Song Thrush	Black-headed Gull
Mallard	Swift	Long-tailed Tit	Mistle Thrush	Great-spotted Woodpecker
Moorhen	Grey Wagtail	Nuthatch	Robin	Green Woodpecker
Herring Gull	Pied Wagtail	Treecreeper	Dunnock	
Bullfinch	Carrion Crow	Goldcrest	Starling	
Buzzard	Jackdaw	Firecrest	House Sparrow	



FEATURED BIRD - GREAT TIT

A small songbird with a white cheek; black cap, throat and collar; single white wingbar and small black bill. The juvenile has light yellowish cheeks, a dull blackish cap and paler underparts than adults.



BAT WALKS - JULY AND AUGUST

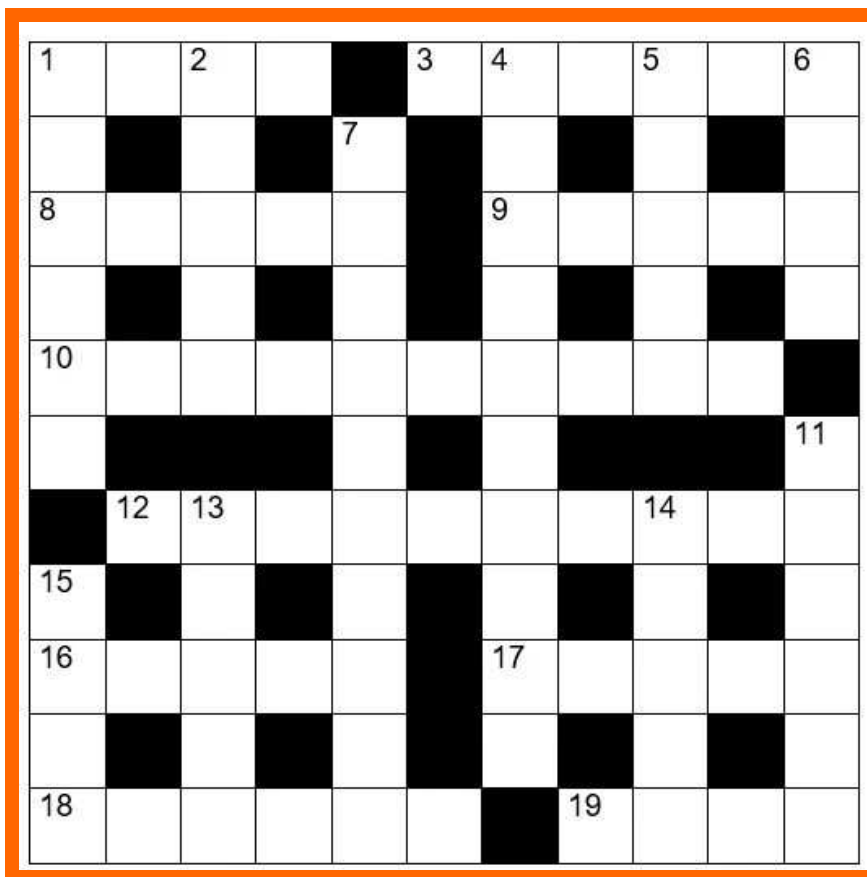
Both Bat Walks sold out, with several new members joining the Friends. The walks were led by David Scully from Kent Bat Group and Scott Hudson from Kent High Weald Partnership. Fascinating pieces of information were heard about the bats' life expectancy and how each species uses different frequencies, what they eat etc.

There was a spot on the first walk where bats were seen but not heard due, David explained, to not hunting so no echolocation. Daubenton's bats flew low over the lake, and there were many!

A huge thank you to David and Scott for their excellent guidance and information.



FOR OUR YOUNGER MEMBERS. Answers on the last page



ACROSS

1. Close it behind you
3. Greek Temple lady's name
8. Bird
9. Mistake
10. Person from Glasgow
12. He stops balls going in goal
16. Orange juice or tea
17. Horse noise
18. Unwilling
19. Flowers grow from them

DOWN

1. Car's home
2. Leg bone
4. Bears foliage through the year
5. Baby insect
6. Type
7. They fall in winter
11. Flowering plant
13. An oil-yielding fruit
14. Received for winning
15. Thought

Bees and butterflies are aplenty in our park, but they are also under threat as their vital habitats disappear. Pollinators will naturally hibernate, rest or shelter within plants or cracks in buildings, but with the modern change in land use, this is not always possible, especially in large swathes



parks, countryside or even gardens. Butterfly Conservation warns that half of Britain's 58+ resident species are under threat of extinction due to the loss of natural habitats and other factors. A study carried out by UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology claims a third of our wild bees and hoverflies are in decline. Something to ponder on seriously for the future???



Dunorlan main gates



Dunorlan Laundry

Dunorlan was once the grounds of a large and very grand mansion, built by the Yorkshire-born millionaire Henry Reed, who made his fortune in Tasmania. The garden was laid out in the 1850s and 1860s by renowned Victorian gardener Robert Marnock.

The Gardener's Cottage



Dunorlan House



Dunorlan Lake



It's always lovely to hear from you so do please keep in touch.

Would you like to feature in our quarterly newsletter?

Tell us about your favourite area of the park and why. If you have any photos of your favourite area, do attach them in jpeg format and send to Joan at cjay13@hotmail.co.uk or Siobhan at dunorlanchair@gmail.com. If you have any ideas about possible events which the Friends could look into for the future, let us know and we can

follow anything up with our Events Organiser. We had two new events this year and both were successes, so we're always looking for more. All money raised during the course of an event goes back into the park to help keep it looking good for everyone.



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Committee Member	Chris Norton	
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If you are a UK Income Tax payer, the Friends can claim 25% from HMRC on any membership fee or donation you make. This means for every £10 you give, the tax man will pay the Friends another £2.50.
If you haven't already completed a Gift Aid form, please contact Jenny, the Friends' Membership Secretary at dunorlanfriends@gmail.com or call 01892 531830



Crossword answers:

ACROSS 1. Gate 3. Hellis 8. Robin 9. Error 10. Glaswegian 12. Goalkeeper 16. Drink 17. Neigh 18. Averse 19. Seed
DOWN 1. Garage 2. Tibia 4. Evergreens 5. Larva 6. Sort 7. Snowflakes 11. Orchid 13. Olive 14. Prize 15. Idea