

FRIENDS OF



OBITUARY OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II



Born on the 21 April, 1926 in Mayfair London, Elizabeth Alexander Mary Windsor was never expected to become Queen.

Princess Elizabeth of York, as she was known then, was just 10 years old when her uncle abdicated from the throne. Her father went on to become King and as the eldest child, she became heir to the throne. She married Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, on November 20, 1947, and they remained married until his death in April 2021.

She ascended to the British throne in 1952, following the unexpected death of her father, King George VI. Her coronation was the first to be televised despite the Prime Minister at the time, Winston Churchill, being opposed to the move. Millions of Britons tuned in to witness the occasion on their television sets.

They had their first child, the now King Charles III, in 1948, then Princess Anne in 1950. Queen Elizabeth had four children in total, with Prince Andrew and Prince Edward being born in 1960 and 1964 respectively.

The legacy of the Queen's reign was one of commitment, long-standing service and devotion as well as great change.

She became a matriarchal figure and symbol for the nation, often holding live broadcasts to address the country during significant national moments.

Queen Elizabeth II was the longest reigning British monarch, having served for 70 years, surpassing the royal reign of her great-great-grandmother Queen Victoria. She worked with 15 Prime Ministers throughout her reign, beginning with Winston Churchill and ending with Liz Truss. She is remembered by world leaders as being honourable, committed and dutiful.

GOD SAVE THE KING

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I take on the role of Chairman at this sad time and I am sure you will join me in thanking the late Michael Olding for his commitment and devotion to the Friends over many years.

Michael's obituary, on page 2, was written by James Cooper (with background help from Michael's family) who worked closely with him for many years and I am pleased to confirm that I am currently in discussions with the family, and the Foundation, regarding a memorial service in the Chapel. **Further details are on page 5.**

Since the last Newsletter, we have made a successful visit to the Kings Theatre (see page 6) and are looking forward to the talk on bats, the coffee morning and the Christmas event. Exciting plans are being made for next year's events and further details will be released soon.

I, and the Committee, take this opportunity to wish all FOSP Members and their families a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Nigel Smith

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The previous period has, of course, been marked by the sad death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, our Sovereign for 70 years. The outpouring of grief was complemented by a nationwide acknowledgement of her unstinting service to the country and her noble, serene and steadfast embodiment of our great British values and traditions. We certainly need the constancy and perspective that she brought in these difficult times. The Foundation observed the period of National Mourning and opened a Book of Condolence.

We were also extremely saddened by the loss of Michael Olding. He was a tremendous advocate for Stansted Park, always keen to explain its history about which he had acquired a vast array of knowledge. He brought his enquiring mind to Stansted, being irrepressibly keen to learn and absorb as much information as he could. That he was a fount of knowledge, especially about the Chapel which he adored, was superbly complemented by a natural and easy teaching style which brought its history, with all its foibles and intricacies, to life for young and old alike. Engaging and enthusiastic, he had an enduring passion for the Estate and the work of the Foundation which he shared with his wife, Sheila. As Chairman, he ably and skilfully led and developed the Friends of Stansted Park into an incredibly successful and hugely supportive organisation which will be his proud legacy and for which we are all extremely grateful. We welcome Nigel Smith as the new Chairman and the Foundation will give him all the necessary support as he leads this important component of the Stansted family.

The Foundation was delighted when the Royal Forestry Society decided to recognise Michael Prior's exemplary work at Stansted Park over the last 32 years with the award of the Long Service Medal. His Citation reads:

'The Forestry landscape at Stansted Park has been very much fashioned in Michael's image. His detailed professional knowledge, innate sense of conservation and love of nature, combined with his clear long term vision of the sustainable future of Stansted has served the Estate extremely well. He is a consummate woodsman and naturalist who has unstintingly provided dedicated and sensitive environmental stewardship of the highest order for over 30 years which is most commendable and worthy of recognition.'

Congratulations Michael!



I would also like to recognise the significant service of Janet Mynors who is stepping down from running the Bookshop after 6 years. Janet has worked extremely hard to establish the Bookshop in the Garden Centre and orchestrated its recent make-over to turn it into a highly attractive and enticing area which has resulted in a significant increase in trading. During her tenure, the Bookshop has raised in excess of £60,000 for the Foundation; an incredible achievement and a real feather in the cap for her and her band of dedicated volunteers. House Opening season encouraged 4,600 visitors to tour the Mansion and Chapel this year, an increase on 1,600 from last year; my sincere thanks go to Aleks and all the House Stewards for making the visitor experience so special. All our visitors are thoroughly impressed with the fine results of the labours of the Garden Volunteers as they stroll through the Walled Gardens. The latter are very relieved that Jed Birch, who works four days a week at Wakehurst Gardens, is able to come and spend a day back at Stansted from time to time. **(Continued on page 2)**

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022

We have been very sad to say goodbye to Lucy Wood, who ran our Events and Marketing effort so effectively, and to Aleks James who managed the House and Stewards so energetically and efficiently. We will all really miss their enthusiastic contribution to the life of Stansted and wish them well for the future. We are now busy recruiting potential replacements in good time to set us up for success next season.

David Bennett

MICHAEL OLDING



Sheila and Michael in Dublin as part of their 2009 cruise

There could hardly have been a better testament to the affection and respect in which Michael was held during his long service as Chairman of the Friends than the turnout at his funeral. It was good to see so many attending from Stansted, including past and present Friends, Staff, and Trustees.

Michael was born on 24th April 1943 and, with his older brother Brian, grew up in Monmouth Road, Portsmouth, having moved there in 1944 when Brian was four and Michael just 18 months. Their mother was a widow, their father, a submariner, having died during the war. When Michael left school he went to work at Felphams the Boat builders. He stayed a few months but was not really suited and went on to join Brickwoods the brewers in the accounts department. They were taken over by Whitbread where Michael ran the Social Club. From an early age it was clear that Michael's ability to get on with others, his communication skills, patience and unfailing courtesy were leading him towards the teaching profession, so he enrolled at teacher training college, qualifying in 1991. His mother was very proud of him. Whilst teaching at his first school, he met Sheila, also a teacher, and they married in January 1993.

Throughout most of their married lives, Michael and Sheila lived in Hampshire. Michael taught at several schools in the Portsmouth area; Arundel Court, Front Lawn, Isambard Brunel, St Albans and Portsdown Primary.

During 1998, a hibernating Friends group at Stansted was re-organised and reconstituted. The staff ran an appeal for artefacts on loan or gift for display in the newly-restored Servants Quarters. This interested Michael on a number of levels, and he and Sheila quickly became involved, joining initially as Room Stewards. In 2003 he joined the Friends Committee as Education officer. When Andrew Grant stepped down as Chairman in 2009, with his energy, enthusiasm and knowledge of the history of Stansted and its owners, Michael was the obvious choice to replace him.

Strongly supported by Sheila, Michael embraced the role full on. He always took a hands-on role in helping to organise the Friends' events, functions, outings and tea parties. Over this period he developed a strong interest in the history of the Chapel, and in the life of its 'builder' and one of the Estate's more intriguing owners, Lewis Way. He did much to help harness external interest in Way's life and contribution to the Estate. Michael's passion was also a coercive force in the Friends' fundraising for the Chapel, and he was very instrumental in the success of the project to research and then restore the East Window in 2012.

With the combination in 2020 of the death of his beloved Sheila, the advent of the Pandemic and certain health issues, Michael found the role of co-ordinating the Friends increasingly challenging. As ever sensitive to the limits of what he could do, he handed over the role of Chairman to Nigel Smith in the spring of 2022. Active to the end, he continued correspondence over the loan of Lewis Way family artefacts.

Michael will be much missed for his unfailing courtesy, his charm and his support for Stansted by both Friends and friends on the Estate. **James Cooper (Former Director - Stansted Estate)**

MRS I BUCKLE (1932 - 2022)

Following the death of Mrs Isa Buckle, the Friends have lost one of their longest serving members. Mrs Buckle, who held honorary membership, lived in Middle Lodge and was the wife of the late Les Buckle, Stansted's well known and much respected gamekeeper. Her funeral was held at The Oaks on 16th June and, joining her family, were trustees and staff representing the Foundation, and by Nigel Smith and Anne Burton, representing FOSP.

Michael Olding (This was Michaels last article for the Newsletter)

MARGARET DORMER (1924 - 2022)

The Friends of Stansted Committee advise you of the sad death of Margaret Dormer, a longstanding FOSP member who was a Steward at Stansted House for many years. Margaret was 93 years old. Margaret's daughter, Michaela, contacted the office recently and asked if we could share the news, as Stansted was a big part of Margaret's life – she still continued to visit the Tearooms with Friends, and friends, after her stewarding days. **Kim Grainger**



For The Fallen

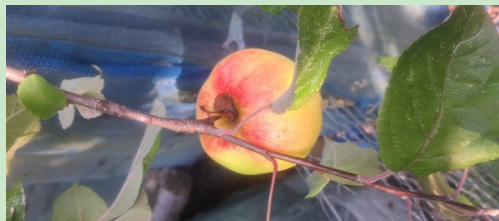
They shall grow not old, as
we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the
sun and in the morning, we
will remember them.

Laurence Binyon



HEAD FORESTER'S NOTES—WINTER 2022

The highlight of the year for me was the visit of the Southern Division of the Royal Forestry Society on the 15th of September with attendance by the Society's President, Sir James Scott. A tractor and trailer tour in the morning with a number of stops looked at various aspects of the forest and its management and was followed by members taking their lunch in the mansion where the AGM was held. After lunch, there were three more stops before the day was finished with tea and cake in the mansion. The Society last visited in 2010, so there were many topics for them to look at and debate. The weather was kind and members and guests had time to discuss many aspects of our diverse profession.



Some of you may remember that several years ago and purely by chance I found an apple on display at RHS Wisley's Autumn Apple Day which had been brought over from Ireland in the 1920's by T E Tomalin, a noted fruit expert and Head Gardener for the ninth Earl of Bessborough. I requested cuttings, which duly arrived and managed to graft three successfully onto suitable rootstocks. These have now grown on in my home nursery into young trees and one has produced the first fruit. We therefore used three in an apple crumble, the fourth I ate straight off the tree and very good they were too. Two of the three trees will now be planted in the Old Orchard, which seems a fitting place for them.

By the time you read this, the Highland cattle will have been in Lady's Walk for a few weeks, providing we can keep them in as they have their own agenda on where they should be. I managed to secure a 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' grant this year, via the South Downs National Park, to help with the considerable cost of re-fencing Lady's Walk so that the area can now be grazed effectively. Over time, this will improve the biodiversity of the area as the cattle will trample unwanted bracken, open up the sward and provide an additional food source for many invertebrates with their dung.



More areas where we have had to remove ash will be replanted this winter, namely parts of Lyels Wood, South Coopers Wood, Pond Wood and Lordington Copse. Powell Forestry, our principal contractor have just finished further areas of ash felling but were not able to extract the wood as I pulled out their big machines just before the rains came in earnest to avoid ground damage, so that will have to wait until spring and drier conditions.

Two things that appear to have been exacerbated by the very hot, dry summer are squirrel damage and elm disease. As I have travelled to different parts of the country, I have seen severe bark stripping of many different species and we have not been immune, with some particularly nice hornbeam being badly affected in one wood and damage to sycamore, field maple and beech in others, despite the number of squirrels culled. However, without the control we carry out, it would be much worse.

Elm disease was particularly bad in Yorkshire but everywhere it seems to be present and the many fine young elm poles are now standing dead. So far, the disease resistant elms we have planted are doing exceptionally well and have shown exceptional growth, if not in all cases, of a form that pleases a forester's eye. Several of the cultivars we are using are known to be used as a food plant by white-letter hairstreak butterflies and it would be wonderful if we could find this rare insect thriving on the Estate.

Michael Prior

FRIENDS CREAM TEA - 18th AUGUST



With blue skies, sunshine and summer temperatures of around 24° C, what better day could have been chosen for the Friend's Cream Tea?

Driving through the woods, the trees were a canopy of green and the event that followed was quintessential English. Approximately seventy people, Members and friends, attended and thoroughly enjoyed devouring scones cream and jam with a good variety of homemade cakes. This was accompanied by numerous cups of tea, all taken in the main hall and music room.



The volunteers worked extremely hard to ensure the afternoon was a success.....and it was. A big thank you to all those who organised such a lovely Friends event.

Valerie Godwin

ROWANS HOSPICE CALENDAR FOR 2023



I am pleased to inform members that Michael Parry (a FOSP member who has often contributed his photographs to this Newsletter) has had a photograph chosen to be part of the Rowans Hospice calendar for 2023.

His photograph titled 'The Sling' which, as we all know, is part of the Stansted Estate, is a breath-taking glimpse of our wonderful woodland in autumn.

If you are able, please support Rowans Hospice, which is a worthwhile charity providing free care and support to adults and their families in our community who have a life-limiting illness. Dedicated hospice care is available round the clock, either in-house or at home, as well as offering services for day visitors in their Living Well Centre. Wellbeing events and classes are available to carers, patients and the bereaved, with no referral required.

Contact Rowans Hospice:- 023 9225 0001

Robert Godwin

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

Sadly, distance made it impossible for me to attend Michael Olding's funeral but, like so many others, I have grieved his passing and the health difficulties he endured after his wife, Sheila, died. The pandemic and cancellation of flights made travel uncertain, so the last time I saw him was on my visit to Stansted for the Friends Christmas evening in 2019. However, we communicated by email quite frequently and exchanged views on the restrictions we were all facing in 2020 and I wanted to share the following with you. Michael wrote.....

Stansted is now fully closed and our private tree planting for Sheila has been postponed. There were two sites available; the Orange Grove and the South Lawn, with a sweet gum or tulip tree suggested for the former and a giant redwood for the South Lawn.

These can be very emotional moments and I can tell you unashamedly that the choice of tree took second place to its location. When we were both approached by a former teaching colleague and friend to consider 'guiding' at Stansted some 23 years ago, Sheila, a fully qualified Physical Education and Sports teacher, was to offer croquet to visitors set out on the South Lawn. It really was a lovely, quaint idea, very English you might say, and for the first season it was an enjoyable and fun thing to do, but wasn't repeated the following year. Sheila went on to do a range of things; guiding in costume, school visits and assisting at weddings and corporate events. She was chosen to guide, with two other appropriately aged and stylish stewards, the Duke of Gloucester around the House when he came to Stansted for the day. She loved that, in fact she loved everything she did at Stansted, but it was the South Lawn where it all started and that is where the tree will be.

In 1999 I had the pleasure of accepting the position as secretary to Andrew Grant who was Chairman of the newly formed Friends of Stansted Park. As a member of the Committee I got to know Michael quite well but, when I undertook the editing of the quarterly Newsletter, I relied on him heavily for articles, knowing how fascinated he was by the Estate's history, especially that of the Chapel and the strong association Ruth Tomalin had with Stansted. During my involvement with the Dutch Garden project, I would drop in to the Chapel when he was showing visitors things of historical interest and enjoy another 10 minute history lesson! A cup of tea with them both was often on offer when passing Langstone to go home to Hayling.

Michael confided his concern to me when Andrew asked him to take over the Chairmanship of FOSP not long after the reopening of the Dutch Garden, feeling that Andrew would be a hard act to follow with his business experience and many contacts. I continued as his secretary until leaving in 2009 but, with the support of the Trustees, committee members and friends, Michael soon became comfortable with his new position and enjoyed the responsibility. He provided leadership with kindness, understanding, patience and remained totally committed to helping the place he loved so much.

I sincerely hope that the tree on the South Lawn will provide a fitting memorial to Michael and his beloved wife, Sheila, and act as a reminder to all Friends of a Chairman who was a truly 'gentle' man.

And finally, Tony and I wish everyone involved in some way at Stansted, peaceful and enjoyable end of year celebrations, after what has been a sad and eventful 2022. Hoping that 2023 will bring increased hope and stability for everyone!

Jill Waring

THURSDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2022 AT 7.00PM - PHOENIX SINGERS



After a absence of three years, the Phoenix Singers are returning to give us a Christmas Concert. There will be about 14 in the choir, with Sarah, the conductor and Nigel at the piano. The concert will follow a similar pattern as previously, with seasonal songs and readings in the first half, followed by an interval with mince pies and mulled wine for us all. Then carols old and new (with audience participation) will complete the evening. This is a great way to start the ball rolling for Christmas.

Numbers are limited so, if you have not yet booked your seat, then please call the Estate Office 02392 412265.

Friends £7.00, Non-members £9.00

Entry is via the North Entrance to Stansted with car parking in front of the house.

Chris Freeborough

ST PAUL'S CHAPEL

Midday services take place in St Paul's Chapel on the first Wednesday of each month. Light refreshments are also served after the service – tea/coffee/biscuits. Please contact the Estate Office if you wish to attend in order that you can be catered for.

Estate Office

BOOKSHOP

The funds raised by Stansted Park Foundation's bookshop in the Garden Centre are used by the Trustees for the enhancement of the Estate and the enjoyment of visitors. See David Bennett's comments on page 1/2.

FROM GARDEN HOUSE DIARIES - BY RUTH TOMALIN

Christmas Eve 1943

A lovely sunny day. Went over to Middle Lodge with sunflower heads for fowls. Yesterday heard carol singers in Westbourne with a flashlight and accompanied by a melodeon. Rode home by Aldsworth, two miles, not a soul on the road. All morning the bombers have gone out. I thought - 'Poor boys ... on Christmas Eve.' Some Canadian soldiers said, "What a Christmas for some one."

Listened to 'Scrooge' on the wireless. Very lonely here. Shades of long ago! It is like the ghost of Christmases past - only our kitchen as usual looks 'stirred up with a stick.' Tom doing the crossword and I knitting socks for Tony. I wonder of course where all the boys are and what they are doing?

I have made a cake and iced it. Marzipan made of soya flour, sugar, lots of almond essence. White icing made of milk powder and sugar. Some violet petals and shreds of pre-war angelica. We have a goose so are lucky.

26th December 1943

E and M. to supper - cold goose and salad, mince pies, jelly (one precious packet left) with home-bottled fruit.

Tonight we heard the names of the new C-in-Cs for the Second Front. People keep saying it will be over by next Christmas. It seems they have the belief that a miracle will happen.

End of the King's broadcast speech: "In the words of a Scottish writer of our day, 'No experience can be too strange and no task too formidable if a man can link it up with what he knows and loves.'" John Buchan.

Elsbeth Tomalin

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Mary & George Wilder

Two important meetings have taken place recently. The first happened back in May when amongst the visitors were the great grandchildren of Mrs Augusta Ivers Mary Wilder, who inherited Stansted from Charles Dixon. As the archivist, I am always troubled when we have queries about the Wilder family for, apart from facts about the destruction of the house by fire in 1900's, the party held on the reopening of this building several years later and the rather notorious divorce of George Wilder, we know very little about them. So the visit of the family to see their great grandmother's house and grave was of great interest to us and we very much hope that, through future contact, we can learn more about their family history.

The second was more recent when I had the great pleasure of a lively and interesting meeting with Mr Alastair Langlands of Bedales School about the theatre at Stansted House. He was very involved with productions at the theatre and extremely knowledgeable. His memories of very happy days spent preparing for performances with a very hospitable Eric, 10th Earl of Bessborough and his charming wife, Mary, and their many friends were fascinating. We are indeed indebted to him for shedding a light on such an idyllic time in the history of Stansted House, just before and after World War Two.

So you see, archiving is, I am happy to say, not always about trying to read difficult hand writing from the past!

Diana Roberts

COMMITTEE MEMBER PROFILES

Continuing the pen picture profiles of FOSP Committee members. Here is number three.....

FOSP COMMITTEE GARDEN VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR - TESSA CULLEY



I have a long association of at least 15 years with Stansted. I first became a House Steward and part of the Education Programme for Schools. At a Volunteer's Lunch, my husband, Michael, was persuaded to join the Garden Volunteers and, before long, I became part of that Happy Band.

I still garden regularly (and help with the Pavilion Displays) and, in addition, for the last few years have helped Diana Roberts with the John Ponsonby archive, which has proved fascinating. This has meant fewer days being a House Steward but each aspect has given me great insight into the history associated with Stansted and the opportunity to meet most interesting people - both colleagues and members of the public, many of whom describe Stansted as their 'Happy Place' as indeed do I.

MICHAEL OLDING'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

A Memorial Service for Michael will take place on **Monday 20th February 2023, at 2.30** in St Paul's Chapel and will be conducted by Edward Mynors.

Michael's family have requested that, in order to plan for catering, please inform the Estate Office of your intended attendance on **023 9241 2265 or enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk**.

Please meet at the House using the north entrance, through the black automatic gates, and park in front of the House.

FOSP Committee

HEAD FORESTER'S WALK - THE GROVES AND EAST PARK - 6TH SEPTEMBER

Although advertised as 'The Groves and Pond Wood' the walk was modified on the afternoon to a shorter walk, due to the forecast of heavy rain and ongoing works in the forest.

No one reported on the walk but Michael Parry took pictures and Michael Prior supplied a stop list so this has been used to compose the article!



That afternoon, although threatening rain, 20 FOSP Members joined Michael for this shortened walk. The forecast rain, however, never materialised and the afternoon turned out mild and dry.

Michael began by pointing out elm disease and oak regeneration before talking about the kissing gate.

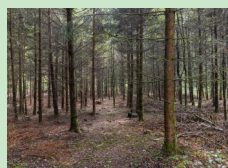
The big oak that stands majestically in East Park loomed ahead and had a vast area of foliage that supports a varied population of insects and wildlife which is beneficial to the area.

At Church Path, replanting of conifers was well established although, unfortunately, there is some indication of chestnut disease (*Phytophthora cinnamomi/cambivora* - ink disease) beginning to take hold.

Discussing biofuel and oak regeneration, Michael pointed out squirrel damage to hornbeam. These little rascals have been attacking more and more species, especially in dry hot weather which the UK had just experienced. Another worry is Spruce bark beetle (*D micans*). The approach by the Forestry Research Association to management of this pest is to breed and release a host-specific predatory beetle, *Rhizophagus grandis*, that is found within the pest's natural range. This strategy is known as biological control. Thankfully this control programme has been, and continues to be highly successful because of the extraordinary ability of the predator to locate its prey even when there are only a few infested trees in the forest. Members then saw the regeneration of *S sempervirens* (coastal redwood) from stumps showing how nature overcomes adversity.

The Members thanked Michael for an interesting and varied walk.

Robert Godwin



Spruce Plantation



Fallen Oak Felled by Storm
Eunice



A Specimen Oak



Biofuel Stack



Kissing Gate

VISIT TO KINGS THEATRE - A THEATRE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE



In 1907 the Kings Theatre opened its doors and has ever since been a magnet for theatregoers from in and around Portsmouth and Southsea.

For 110 years audiences have enjoyed musicals, plays, comedy, opera, dance, talks and film in the sumptuous surroundings of a beautiful Grade II listed proscenium arch theatre, designated by the Theatres Trust as a 'theatre of national architectural importance'.*

J W Boughton conceived and brought to fruition the building of the theatre, which was designed by the notable theatre architect, Frank Matcham. The theatre stayed in the control of its original owners, The Portsmouth Theatre Limited, until 1964 when it was purchased by Commander Reggie & Mrs Joan Cooper. In 1990 it was sold to Hampshire County Council.

In 2001, after a successful campaign by AKTER (Action for Kings Theatre Restoration) to keep the theatre open, the theatre was purchased by Portsmouth City Council and leased to the Kings Theatre Trust Ltd who undertook the restoration of the building, whilst the Kings Theatre Southsea Ltd operated it on a day-to-day basis.

The Kings continues to make history with our great programme, community projects and daily preservation of this remarkable theatre. - Ron Hasker, Director



On the stage with our guide, Ron
Hasker

On a chilly September morning, a small group of Friends met at the Kings Theatre, Southsea for what turned out to be a most interesting tour of this fascinating and historic theatre.

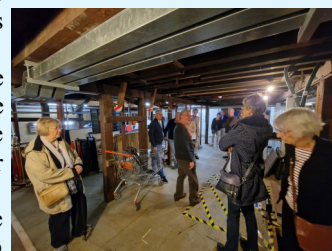
The staff and tour guides were extremely knowledgeable, telling us about the history of the Theatre since its construction in 1907, through its various owners, to the start of its restoration in 2003 by the Kings Theatre Trust.

To date the Trust has spent over £2 million restoring the auditorium and ensuring the building is weatherproof, the majority of this money coming from box office revenue. The theatre has a capacity for 1600 people and is a major venue for touring companies and local drama groups.

Although not for the fainthearted (there are literally hundreds of steps) we were able to see all areas of interest: the dressing rooms, under the stage, actually on the stage, and right up through the stalls to the Gods. An external lift is planned for the future, but this is not a simple project with a Grade II listed building.

Thank you Nigel and Chris, for arranging this excellent tour.

Rogon Burton



Beneath the stage

RICHARD BARWELL



During the years 1781-1804, Stansted Estate was under the ownership of the *Indian Nabob*, Richard Barwell. We read in the 10th Earl's 'The Enchanted Forest' that Barwell spent a fortune upgrading the House and Grounds, improvements which much impressed many contemporaries. Less impressive, perhaps, was Barwell's personal qualities, with opinions ranging from easy and pleasant to cruel, cunning, tyrannical and profligate.

Newspapers of the period are potentially a rich source of evidence, though, as today, one has to be wary of accuracy. With this in mind the following extracts are of considerable interest from 'Hampshire Telegraph' and 'Sussex Chronicles' dated September - October 1800

On Sunday died, at his seat in Stansted, in Sussex, Richard Barwell Esq, aged 63, late MP for Winchelsea, a man of most liberal endowment and gentlemanly demeanour. Mr Barwell from a regular gradation of service of the Hon. East India Company, brought to England one of the largest fortunes ever accumulated about 25 years since, soon after which he purchased the beautiful demesne of Stansted, from the Executors of the deceased Earl of Halifax.

There does appear little doubt that Barwell spent extravagantly and lead a life that can be best described as controversial. As a consequence, the manner of his funeral service is indeed extraordinary, as the following account illustrates:

On Monday last, at noon, the remains of Richard Barwell Esq. were interned in the family vault under the communion table at Westbourne (the parish church of Stansted House). The service was, at the specific request of the deceased, wholly devoid of that magnificence which had distinguished his life. The family coach with the four celebrated bay horses lead the way, in which were Dr. Sanders, Mr Butter, Attorney (both of Chichester) and two other medical men, the hearse, drawn by six horses, was un-ornamented; the coffin was plain black, the mourning coaches followed, the first carrying the two sons of the deceased and another young gentleman also related to him - the second concerned Admiral Sir Isaac Coffin, Bart. in full Uniform; Barwell Brown, Esq. and ? Cole; Esq. all brothers-in-law to the deceased; and a Clergyman. In the third coach were the four principal mourners, farmers of the Estate who upheld the pall. The procession was closed by the family chariot empty, drawn by two beautiful horses.

Why Barwell chose to have such a low key service is not specified and must remain a mystery. As was customary, there were no females present, certainly not the pretty 16 year old girl of American extraction he had married in 1785. This event in itself, as the 10th Earl quotes, was a great surprise, for Barwell had 'declared most strongly against Matrimony' despite having previously fathered a number of children.

Today at Stansted other than the two long avenues, he originally cut three, little remains of Barwell's presence. Certainly not the 400 dozen of the most pure and hugely flavoured Hock, Preignac, Bersac, Claret, Madeira and choice old Port that were auctioned on the 31st October shortly after his death. There is, of course though, his impressive memorial in the chancel at Westbourne Church by the great sculptor Joseph Nollekens.

Stansted's own Chapel was begun shortly after Barwell's death by his successor, the Rev Lewis Way, who bought the estate in 1805. Way, was, to say the least, another extraordinary individual, totally opposite in character to the Indian Nabob.

Together, however, in their different ways, they have made a fascinating contribution to the rich tapestry of Stansted's glorious past. "Enchanted Forest" by the 10th Earl of Bessborough, is now on sale at the House for just £5.

On Tuesday last, Mr Barwell's stag hounds roused a deer, near Lumley Seat, which took thro' Lord George Lennox's Park, towards the sea coast, and after a chase of more than 25 miles (in less than two hours) was killed near Lavant. The only Gentlemen in at the death were Mr M. Turner, and Mr Watts, of Stansted.

For more information see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Barwell

Michael Olding

Editor's Note: This is the penultimate historic article from Michael written before his untimely death.

ELIZABETH OUR QUEEN



A double rainbow crossed the sky,
Elizabeth had died.
The heathered hills, great glens and rills
Shed tears and cried.
Her cortège came through the mellow fields,
The saddest ride,
To lie in State where people formed
From far and wide
To grieve and say 'farewell' to Her,
Each side by side.
She travelled on to London town,
One final stride
Where more folk stood and thought of Her
With love and pride.
She now has found eternal rest.
There she shall bide.

The meaning of Elizabeth is: "God is my oath" - It is of Hebrew origin.

Valerie Godwin

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022

2022 HOUSE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NOVEMBER

Thursday 24th at 7.30pm
CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN
(RESCHEDULED FROM SEPTEMBER)

An evening of two local singing sisters, Ciara and Ceili,
accompanied, by another local musician on the piano,
David Harrington

Tickets £15 (including interval refreshments).
Friends of Stansted Park £10

DECEMBER

Thursday 1st, Friday 2nd and Friday 9th 10.30am - 12.30pm.

CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING

Price £45.00 per person.

Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd December
A CHRISTMAS CAROL (Details on Stansted Website)

Friday 9th
CHRISTMAS WREATH MAKING (as above)

Thursday 15th at 4.00pm
CAROL SERVICE IN THE CHAPEL
Mulled wine and Mince Pies in the Mansion afterwards.

Friday 16th
AN EVENING WITH PETER AUTY
In St Paul's Chapel (sparkling wine and canape reception in the
Mansion House afterwards)

First performance 5.30pm (doors open 5.15pm)
Second performance 7.15pm (doors open at 7pm)

£35 per adult (Plus Eventbrite booking fees)
FOSP Members £25 booked via the Estate Office

For more information please contact the office on
023 9241 2265 or enquiry@stanstedpark.co.uk

<https://www.stanstedpark.co.uk/whatson>

A discount to FOSP members is available on most Foundation
events.

A tree planting in the Arboretum of a redwood on behalf of
FOSP Members, commemorating The Jubilee, is planned to take
place in the near future. Details, when known, will be notified to
Members in due course. *FOSP Committee*

FOSP 2022 DATES

NOVEMBER

FOSP COFFEE MORNING
Friday 18th at 10.00am
Telephone The Estate Office to book

DECEMBER

THE PHOENIX SINGERS RETURN
Thursday 8th at 7.00pm

After a three year absence, the Phoenix Singers are returning to
give us a Christmas Concert. **Members £7 Non Members £9**

NOTE: We are arranging for the Friends visit in 2023 to
Parham House and Gardens on Wednesday 14th June 2023.

Parham is one of the country's finest Elizabethan houses, set at
the foot of the South Downs in West Sussex. This beautiful place
has changed little over the centuries and remains a family home .

Further details and booking information will be included in the
Spring news letter.

PLEASE TELEPHONE 023 9241 2265
TO BOOK YOUR PLACE for talks, coffee mornings, FOSP
events etc in order that we can arrange appropriate seating and
refreshments. Thank you

For Foundation and FOSP events at the House, use the North
Entrance, go through the automatic black gate, and park in front of
the House unless otherwise directed.

COMMITTEE MEMBER CONTACTS

Chairman:- Nigel Smith
ngs.1957@hotmail.com

Secretary:- Anne Burton
anneburton99@gmail.com

Treasurer:- Sarah Hutchinson
hutchsj@yahoo.co.uk

Membership:- Paul Bennett
friendsofstanstedpark@outlook.com

Newsletter Editor:- Robert Godwin
crana.crana@ntlworld.com

For FOSP Membership Enquiries please contact
Paul Bennett

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR THOSE WHO RENEW IN JANUARY

It is that time of year again when we think about renewing our membership to the Friends of Stansted Park. For those of you who pay by Standing Order, you need do nothing at all, whilst those Members who pay by other means may like to consider changing to paying this way and details will be found below. To save on costs from now on we are not sending out new membership cards to those who renew on the first of January. All we ask is that on last year's card for you to cross out the expiry date of the 31st January 2023 and make a note that your renewal will be by the 1st January every year.

If you would like to set up a Standing Order, it is quite easy to set up online with your bank, or call into your nearest branch, making the payment for the 1st January each year to: -

Friends of Stansted Park Account Number: 61788627 Sort Code: 60-10-20
(Please use your Membership number as a reference)

Alternatively, you can pay by BACS to the FOSP account, using the details above or by card via Kim at the Stansted Estate Office, giving your name and membership number. You also have the option to pay by cheque, payable to Friends of Stansted Park, and sent to: -

Stansted Park Foundation, Stansted Park, Rowlands Castle PO9 6DX

Subscriptions remain the same: Double £25, Single £15 and Family £30

Please, if you have any queries or changes to address or email, then contact the Membership Secretary, Paul Bennett, by email on: -
friendsofstanstedpark@outlook.com or call the Estate Office on **023 9241 2265**

NEXT FOSP NEWSLETTER COPY DATE FOR ARTICLES

Friday 27th January 2023. NOTE: Had copies of the Newsletter are available from the Estate Office. *Editor*

FOSP Newsletter - Designed, produced and edited by Robert and Valerie Godwin - crana.crana@ntlworld.com