

The Parish Pump

The Journal of The Marden Society

March 2009

Chairman's Report to the AGM

Good evening once again. As you will all know by now, this is my last report to you as Chairman. I announced at last year's AGM that 2008 would be my final year at the helm and my decision still stands.

Not because the role is difficult or onerous but because there comes a time in any job or situation, and, indeed, with life in general, however rewarding or interesting it may be, to move on. I feel it is now the time for me to move on.

My successor need have no fears. They will have a dedicated, hard-working committee to assist them. I cannot thank them enough for all they have done to keep the Society running, all of them, without exception.

But I will, if I may, (even tough starting a sentence with 'But' is nearly as great a grammatical crime as starting one with 'And'), record my very special thanks

to Edith Davis who has been secretary of the Society throughout my time as Chair. I could not have asked for better or more loyal support. I do not intend to go through all last year's programme; you know what that was. We had some really enjoyable speakers during the year and I am sorry if you missed any of them.

The support you have given us and the prudent management of our finances means that for one year only, 2009 will be a subscription holiday; meetings will be free and you'll still receive your Parish Pump! I hope you enjoy the year ahead.

The Committee also decided that as the July meetings are poorly attended mainly because of summer holidays, there will be no meetings in that month.

Lastly, I would like to thank you all, the Members, for making my time as Chairman as enjoyable as it has been. Thank you. GRAHAM TIPPEN

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2009

AT 8PM IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, OLD SCHOOLROOM

Graham Johnson

Kent - An Unusual View

*For detailed information about the village don't forget to visit
Marden's very own website Marden Online at www.marden.org.uk*

GARDEN BIRDWATCH

This is an occasional report following our first taste of winter for some years. It coincides with a BTO survey into how birds keep warm in winter. It is as important to keep the water bowls thawed, as it is to offer the birds rich foods high in fat content of which, sunflower hearts are best.

During the week of snow we noticed that there were more Blackbirds than usual some of which were really aggressive around the food. I rang BTO and was told that they were probably from Scandinavia where the winter this year was particularly harsh.

We have also attracted large numbers of Siskins to the feeders, the first for many years. We have had as many as four Robins around the feeders at one time with no sign of aggression. The BTO research into how birds keep warm in winter is worth quoting here.

That certain small birds are operating on the edge during the winter months can be seen from the way in which their populations crash dramatically following a particularly severe winter. BTO monitoring studies have documented the impact of bad winters on the populations of Wren, Long-tailed Tit and Goldcrest.

These birds are particularly vulnerable



to bad weather, because they are predominantly insectivorous and small in size. Interestingly, the fact that Wren, Long-tailed Tit and Goldcrest populations have been doing well over recent years is very much down to the sequence of mild winters that we have experienced.

So how do these small birds keep warm during very severe winters without going to warmer climates? On its own snow, has little impact on Wrens and some individuals will feed or even roost underneath it.

However, low winter temperatures can reduce the Wren population by two thirds, so it is no surprise that Wrens may roost communally in nestboxes in an effort to keep warm during cold winter nights. Communal roosting is also seen in Blue Tits, Goldcrests and Wrens, all of which may use roosting pouches or nestboxes.

Most Wren roosts contain just a few individuals but up to 60 have been reported roosting together. Long-tailed Tits may also roost communally, but do not tend to use cavities. Instead the birds huddle together in a

line along a branch in the middle of a bush, with the dominant bird in the middle.

EDITH DAVIS



NEW CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE FOR THE PARISH PUMP

As the new Chairman of the Marden Society, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

I have lived in the village for thirteen years now, and am the village correspondence for the Kent Messenger.

I take over from Graham Tippen, who has done a sterling job over the last couple of years, for which many, many thanks. He took over from Chris Gosling, who took over from Richard Wells, so they are all hard acts to follow.

However with the help of a very active Committee I hope to muddle through. We have a full programme of talks planned, so please do support the Society as often as you can.

The Society has produced two very successful offshoots (the History Society and the Walking Group), now independent of the Society, but we all work closely together to preserve the village while it grows and changes. I hope for your support

MAUREEN CLAYTON

SUBSCRIPTIONS REMINDER

For one year only, 2009 will be a subscription holiday. As Graham Tippen said in his Annual Report to the Members this will not mean that the Parish Pump will be on holiday.

You will still receive your free copy just before the next meeting dates and we hope you will find it just as interesting as usual.

During the year we will be hoping to recruit new members; do you know someone who might be interested in joining as a Member?

Why not persuade them to give us a try? We can't offer them wild parties but we do have friendly meetings and interesting Speakers.

MARDEN SOCIETY COMMITTEE

Your committee for 2009 is

<i>Chairman</i>	Maureen Clayton
<i>Secretary</i>	Edith Davis
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rob Spain
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	Aileen Hill

Other Committee members:

Peggy Skelton	Diane Fisher
Jane Stevens	Steve McArragher
Pamela Tomkinson	

MARDEN WALKING GROUP

Our next guided walks will be as below:

Sunday 29 March at 2pm

from the Village car park: Walk to Claygate and back through the orchards and beside the River Teise - five and a half miles

Saturday 4 April at 2pm

from the Village car park: Historic walk in

Marden with photographs showing the Village "then and now", suitable for families and all interested in Marden's history.

A new set of walks entitled "Six Further Walks" is in production and should be ready by April; so look out for them in the Post Office.

CATHERINE ANDERSON

What's in a name?

Looking at the Tithe Map of 1841 is fascinating – at least to me. All the little hop poles, denoting the hop gardens all over Marden, would barely appear today. However, did you know that each field had its own name? No-one knows when they were named, but each one tells a story, a description of the land in its own right. Here are just selections.

There are those with a botanical aspect – trees were very popular – Maple Tree Field, Chesnut(!) Field, Ash Bed, Chequer Tree Field, Filbert Platt, Elm Tree Field, Alder Beds – some must have been rather damp – Ozier Bed, Rushy Field, Willow Bed – some much prettier – Cammomile Field, Gorse Field, Broom Field, Flax Gratten, Daisy Mead – then the very prickly variety – Thistly Field, Thorn Field, Bramble Wood.

Also very popular were animals & birds – Great Ox & Little Ox, Coney Field & Warren Field, Cow Field, Fox Hole Field, Calves Platt, Bo Peep, Horse Pond Meadow – then – Swans Meadow, Rookery Orchard, Lapwing Field, Great Red Robin – also Cricketing Field, Eel House Meadow, Otter Cape Mead – and who would want to enter Snakes Wood?

Some names are purely descriptive –

Hourglass Field, Great Shoulder of Mutton Field, Waistcoat Field, Windmill Field (near Bumper's Hall), Island Shaw in Bridge Field, Three Cornered Field, Field over the Road, Flat Field, Roundabout Field, Red Field, Yellow Field, Hilly Field, Kiln Field, Eight Acres.

Then there are those that give the agricultural condition – Mud Field, Marl Pit Field, Chalk Mead, Flood Ditch, Wetmail Pond Field, Drymail Pond Field, Stone Pit Field, Humpback Meadow, Banky Field, Rough Field – and hold your nose – Dung Field.

Other fields would appear to give their use – Sawpit Field, Quarry Field, Gravelpit Field, Sheepwash Meadow, Dog Kennel Field, Hopper House Field, Well Field, Fletchery (near Railway Cottages), Cockpit.

Our sympathies go to the farmers of Poor Field, Peppercorn, Labour in Vain, Further Hard Pennard, Great Heartache, Little Heartache – on a more positive sounding note – Lady Key, Lords Field, Hailbrights, Rainbow Square Wood, Opportunities (Widehurst).

So may I finish with one more – Bottoms!

EUNICE DOSWELL

(This article first appeared in the Pump in 2004)

ADVANCE NOTICE OF MEETING ON 27 MAY 2009

AT 8PM IN THE MEMORIAL HALL, OLD SCHOOLROOM

A Walk Around the Saxon Shoreway by Christopher Wade

*The Parish Pump is distributed
free to members of The Marden Society
every two months*



*For details of membership please contact
the Hon Secretary
Edith Davis on 01622 831904*