

Calendar photos: Thank you to all who have submitted photos for the Hilltop Villages Calendar. We are very grateful for your responses and now have many more stunning photographs than the 60 or so that we include in the calendar each year. However, we are looking at ways in which we might use more, possibly on the website or new cards. Sponsorship and sales of the calendar make a significant contribution to paying James for routine maintenance of the Commons and so your help is very much appreciated. Once again, we are delighted that Susie Bell will design it for us. Although it is eight years since she left Heath End, Susie says that she still enjoys seeing all of our local photographs and the time and skill that she devotes to the calendar is in return for the many hours that she spent walking and riding the local area when she lived here.

Pre- Christmas Fair: Morning coffee and a pre-Christmas sale will be held at the Cricket Club on Saturday 26th November as we did last year. More details will be announced beforehand but pre- ordered boiled fruit cakes, cards and calendars will be available. We will also have some cards which would be suitable as Christmas cards on sale and of course our other cards make very acceptable gifts if you are looking for affordable presents. In order to pre-order a fruit cake please email lindsaygriffin@yahoo.co.uk. Please don't leave it to the last minute! They remain £15 each.

Don't Frighten the Horses: On Saturday 3rd September Janet organised a second training event for dog walkers and their dogs when they encounter horses on the rides and elsewhere. Janet wrote 'Another group of 11 dogs and their owners met opposite the Full Moon for the 'Don't Frighten the Horses' training session. Judy Bullock and Kate Ballingall, riding Murphy and Cody respectively, gave an informative talk before riding up and down the road several times to condition the dogs to the sound of metal shoes on a tarmac road – a noise that can be alarming to the dogs!



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‘We then all ventured down to the bottom ride where the horses weaved around the dogs and then moved as a group down to a wider part of the ride just before Horseblock Lane. Here the dogs could all line up on the bank whilst the horses rode past them at speed. This is invaluable training for dogs and handlers alike – reminding dog walkers (and cyclists!) always to make themselves known by talking if approaching horses from behind so that the horses are not suddenly startled. Also, please don’t hide in the bushes, crouched down with your dog in an attempt to get out of the way as this will probably startle the horse even more!

‘Please put your dog on a lead as you see horses coming and, hopefully, we can all continue to enjoy the wonderful Commons in harmony.’

‘Thanks to all of those who came along – Elaine Wallis for helping and of course our riders Judy and Kate. We raised £150 to be donated to HCCPS who keep the footpaths and horse rides clear for all to enjoy.’ Our thanks too to Janet for all of her work in organising the event.

Bucks Invertebrate Group Visit: Saturday 3rd September was also a very busy day for others on the Commons. Thanks to Fiona Everingham of Bucks and Milton Keynes Environmental Record Centre we were privileged to have a visit from members of Bucks Invertebrate Group who carried out two surveys on the Commons. The **daytime session** was led by Martin Harvey, from the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and the evening moth session by Neil Fletcher. Neil has provided us with a provisional list of 62 invertebrates which he recorded during the day but we have yet to receive the lists from other members of the group, including the leader. Although we have many records of other species found on our Commons thanks to the many people who have seen the importance of observing our local environment and alerting us to changes that take place, other than butterflies and moths we have only very patchy records of other invertebrates and so these will be a very welcome addition to our records.

Evening Session: In the evening, the visiting moth experts chose locations mainly along the bottom ride where they used generators and sheets to attract the moths as we used to do. We have not yet had the results from the visitors’ haul since some of the identification requires dissection or examination of the genitalia of the moth to establish its species.



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On both Friday and Saturday evenings, David, Christine and Peter Bygate also set their traps in three of the usual places where there is an available electricity supply, Hawridge Court Farm, Flint Cottage and Mermaid Cottage and on the Saturday alone they trapped over 35 species and have now recorded a massive 325 macro moths and 62 micros on our Commons.



At the fete, two eight year olds, Edward Mitchell and Jordan Kirk-Hale, brought a dead Clifden Nonpareil to show us. Sadly, it is the only one of the species to have been found on the Commons this year but the three we found last year caused great excitement and it is good to know that this one was around.





A Red Underwing. New to the Commons.

It would be really useful to learn more of the behaviours of insects around us. Over the summer, I have had a small species of wasps nesting in my house wall and I was astonished to see what I thought were hornets entering the same nest. Lizzie Every was able to clarify that the 'hornets' were in fact Hornet Mimic Hoverflies which co-exist with the wasps. Apparently, they clean up the nest whilst they gain protection from the wasps. How is that for a win-win situation?

Isobel's present: Isobel had especially wanted something crafted from a piece of wood from the Commons as a leaving present after her hard work over 20 years. Happily, Christine was able to find a suitable piece of Cherry which we commissioned Richard Charles to turn into a stunning bowl and salad servers. Richard also documented the process of making the bowl and this is being posted on the website.



As it was...



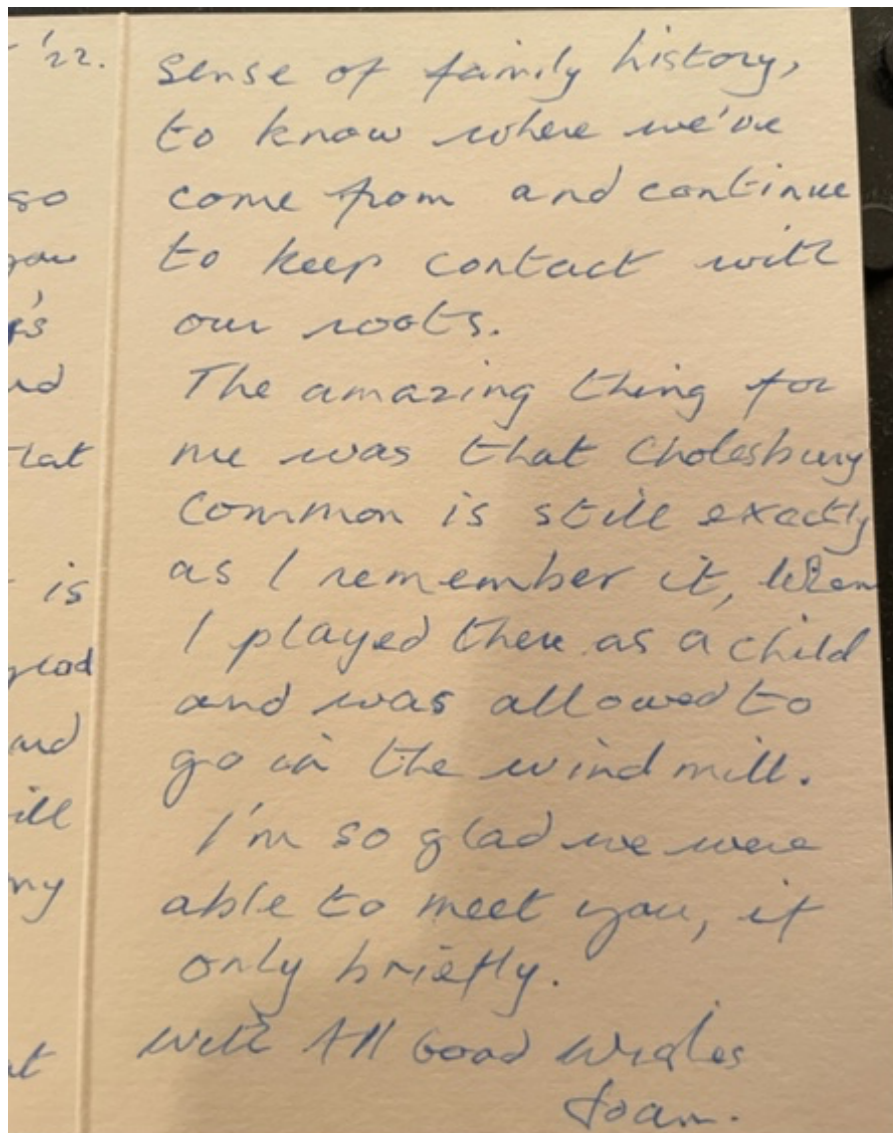
... and the result!



and a very happy Isobel!

Ash Tree Inspection Visit from John Morris: This took place in late August and mainly covered trees which may pose a risk because of their proximity to the roads or paths. John has marked ones which need felling in the next 18 months with pink paint. It is hoped that Pete Leybourne and his team will be back to start felling work in early October. The veteran Ashes opposite Bowmore Farm have been given a reprieve for now since they have not yet declined from dieback and because they provide valuable habitat. Leaving brambles etc beneath them will prevent people from getting too close for fear of falling branches and we may change the routes of some footpaths near these and other veterans as a further safety precaution.

Happy memories of Cholesbury Common for a 90 year old: Rebecca Walton was contacted by the son of Joan (Purkiss?) the granddaughter of Thomas Robinson who was the miller at the windmill before the war. Thomas rented the Old Manor House and is buried in Cholesbury Churchyard. Joan spent the summers here with her grandfather as a child and expressly asked to visit on her 90th birthday with 12 or more of her extended family. They were able to walk around the house and to visit the windmill as she had done as a child. In her letter of thanks to Rebecca, Joan wrote:-



'22. Sense of family history,
to know where we've
come from and continue
to keep contact with
our roots.
The amazing thing for
me was that Cholesbury
Common is still exactly
as I remember it, when
I played there as a child
and was allowed to
go in the windmill.
I'm so glad we were
able to meet you, if
only briefly.
With All Good Wishes
Joan.

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And Thank You: Once again we are most grateful to all of the experts in their fields who are continuing to add to our knowledge of the many species that thrive on the Commons from the tiniest mites to our magnificent trees. It also gives us great pleasure to know that the Commons give constant joy and happy memories to people of all ages.

If you are a subscriber to this newsletter but not a member of the HCCPS please do join us and support our work on the Commons. You can do so through the Commons website:

<https://www.hawridgeandcholesburycommons.org/hawridgecholesbury-preservation-society>