



Newsletter Summer/Autumn 2006

Rede Hall

At Rede Hall, having ploughed the land in the autumn, the weather worked its wonders to produce a much better structure & tilth. The onions were sown into reasonable seedbed, as were the potatoes. Crops of raspberries, red beet, lettuce & strawberries much appreciated their allotted area of enhanced soil type i.e. compost over clay. The hot summer meant additional water from our bowser which helped greatly. In January 2006 a practical Farm Incident First Aid Day was held for all farmworkers and support workers. The excellent training was provided by Marion Dunmore, St. John's Ambulance.

Philip

Old Hall Report

The MFT Friday team continued their work of looking after the Old Hall cows and calves through the Spring.

We also tackled some tree pruning and constructed a land drain, culvert and manhole. Bricklaying and mixing cement mortar are some of Alan, Alex and Miriam's many skills. Whoops I nearly forgot the gate post erection and gate hanging. Well done and thank you from everyone here.

Ian

Conservation

The team has been actively involved in conservation until early April when the demands of the land and May event at Rede necessitated a temporary absence from conservation. Work undertaken at sites in Bury included seasonal coppicing (producing future bean poles, pea sticks and material for bonfires), water meadow restoration, removal of tree guards, path maintenance and attendance at two willow weaving workshops.

Bernadette

THANK YOU SO MUCH :

OUR SUCCESS AND CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN MADE POSSIBLE BY THE COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT OF MANY INDIVIDUALS, ORGANISATIONS AND BUSINESSES RECORDED OVERLEAF: -

KPMG provide welcome support

KPMG volunteers from the Ipswich and Cambridge offices joined MFT on Tuesday 9th May to help out with some of the urgent jobs at MFT premises at Rede Hall Farm, Rede, near Bury St. Edmunds. KPMG is an international financial firm providing audit, tax and advisory services to its clients. KPMG and CSV had initially approached MFT in the summer of 2005 with the view of holding a possible team building day and undertaking jobs for the charity in early autumn 2005. CSV is a national organisation "involving people in high quality volunteering and learning opportunities." The time frame was too tight so it was rescheduled to May 2006.

A large number of volunteers were expected hence considerable planning and resources were needed to host an event of this size. We are very grateful to Joanne Fahey (KPMG) and Mike Harrison (CSV) for co-ordinating the planning meetings and giving practical advice on hosting such an event.

On the day, 37 members (plus film crew!) arrived (it had rained all week) to a damp farm ready and willing to work hard. Erecting rabbit fencing, constructing a workbench, making bird boxes and boot jacks, devising an understanding money aid, compiling word and picture lists, setting up an irrigation system and establishing frames for the raspberry canes were all undertaken with enthusiasm and skill!

The CBRN Regiment from RAF Honington had arrived at 8.00a.m. to put up a large mess tent for shelter (the rain didn't materialise but scorching sun did!)

Green Café (a local catering company using organic produce) served refreshments and nutritious lunch. Margie Thompson (MFT member) took photos of all the activities and various committee members were involved in preparatory work.

We all had a very enjoyable day and the enthusiasm and hard work of the KPMG volunteers was second to none. The achievements saved us many hours work and brought forward our developments by about 3 months. Perhaps we will let the photos speak for themselves.



Forthcoming events:

6th September 2006 7.30.p.m. bi monthly meeting - all welcome— Stowmarket area - exact venue to be confirmed

Mid September (exact date depends on summer weather) Potato harvesting and bagging at Old Hall, East Bergholt

Late September/early October (again date weather dependent) Potato Harvesting and bagging at Rede Hall Farm, Rede contact Ian on 01206 298974 or David 01787 237460

Saturday 21st October 2006

MFT AGM. and tenth birthday celebrations— 10.00am. meet Rede Village Hall for 5 mile ramble in local area with Bury Rambling Club (walk leader Chris Barker 01284 768 729)

1.00.p.m. Lunch at Rede village Hall using MFT and local produce 2-3.00.p.m. Tour of MFT workshop, land and exhibition (Rede Hall Farm) 3.15.p.m refreshments

3.30.p.m. AGM. ———Contact: send e-mail enquiry or to Bernadette 01359 230498/
David 01787 237460 info@m-f-t.org.uk

MANY MANY THANKS are extended to you all. Some special thank yous for recent support:

ARCO, BECKWILL BUILDERS, BEN BURGESS (NEWMARKET) LTD, BURY RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION, BURY VOLUNTEER CENTRE, CHRIS STOREY, CLARKES OF WALSHAM, CBRN REGIMENT RAF HONINGTON, CENTRAL WOOL GROWERS, D.J.EVANS LTD DEFRA, HORHAM VILLAGE SUPPORTERS, JEWSONS, K.P.M.G. MARGIE THOMSON (MFT VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHER), MARION DUNMORE AND ST.JOHN'S AMBULANCE BRIGADE, MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL, MID SUFFOLK ACTION IN PARTNERSHIP (FORMERLY MSVOF), MR D. WARREN, MR. MURTON, Mr.C PARKINGTON, NIGEL AND CHRIS OAKLEY, REDE HALL FARM, OLD HALL COMMUNITY, EAST BERGHOLT, RANGERS OF NOWTON AND HARDWICK PARKS, SAINSBURY'S, SB SURVEYORS, SOUTH SUFFOLK SHOW COMMITTEE, STEPHANIE COLLYER, STOWMARKET VOLUNTEER CENTRE, SUFFOLK ACRE, SUFFOLK SINGLE GATEWAY, TAKEBACK LTD, THOMPSON AND MORGAN, TUCKWELLS OF WORLINGWORTH, VOLUNTEER DRIVERS OF SUFFOLK COMMUNITY CAR SERVICE, MR.EMENY AND MR. PEARL (MFT VOLUNTEER CAR DRIVERS), AND MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO GIVE UP THEIR TIME, SHARE THEIR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE AND /OR DONATE TO MFT.
YOU HAVE ALL MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE .

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Telephone Bernadette on 01359 230498

Or David on 01787 237460

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CHALLENGING TIMES AHEAD

To secure the long term financial stability and decrease dependence on grant- making organisations MFT took the decision to introduce charges for farmworker placements. The proposal was highlighted in October 2004 and farmworkers, their carers and families were encouraged to seek sources of funding for the individual's place and, in particular, to consider Direct Payments from the local county council. By January 2006 ,the increasing competition from many charities seeking fewer and fewer funds from grant making organisations, had increased MFT's difficulties in securing large grants. This was in addition to decreased personnel resources to undertake the many hours work to submit numerous grant applications. Hence a decision was taken that in order to keep MFT in operation charges would be introduced in April 2006. For current farmworkers (some of whom were awaiting outcomes of assessments in respect of Direct Payments.) an eight week window was given with the final date being the end of May 2006 when services would need to be temporarily suspended in order to conserve the few funds for as long as possible. Potential new farmworkers will need to have funding in place before being able to take up a place with MFT. Meanwhile over the last two years central government had cut monies allocated to local authorities.

In February 2006 Suffolk County Council confirmed Social Services cuts of £14.5 million as part of £24million cuts to reduce council tax rises. We have confirmed that these cutbacks have severely reduced budgets for all citizens with specific support needs.

There have been many meetings and letters but at the time of writing no decisive outcomes. The effect on MFT farmworkers is traumatic. They have worked hard over many years to create and establish the Trust. They have worked hard on the farms and in conservation proving their skills and acquiring new ones. This has all been achieved with appropriate support and in environments which have encouraged personal development and friendships.

Grant applications are ongoing and we are approaching local companies for farmworker sponsorship. We already have a few people supporting us via Gift Aid and payroll giving .We would be pleased to see this increase amongst our supporters and members

This is the hardest challenge we have yet faced but with a team effort we will overcome the odds. MFT is renowned for determination, commitment and tenacity. We didn't sink when foot and mouth was affecting farms and the countryside . We undertook educational visits, science of farming discussions, first aid training and when parks opened started conservation. Two new committee members have joined the hard working team with increased output in respect of contacting companies and trusts. We really appreciate the efforts of everyone who has enabled the work of the MFT to continue and welcome new supporters and members. We are all striving to ensure that MFT will be able to operate from a secure financial base thereby providing a long term future in farming for the current and future MFT farmworkers .

WELCOME to David Axton (marketing and publicity officer), Richard Hopper (Committee member) Yuk Lun Wong (website coordinator) Doug Neupert (Treasurer and support worker)