



Newsletter Spring/ Summer 2008

HOT NEWS! SAM's Rewarding Award

MFT is incredibly proud to report that Sam Cook has won second place in the Suffolk Foundation award of Volunteer of the Year.

The committee of Millennium Farm Trust unanimously nominated Sam for his outstanding efforts, hard work, enterprise and being a shining example of how to be a volunteer.

Sam joined Millennium Farm Trust in year 2000 as a farmworker and a volunteer committee member. Despite having a learning disability and finding reading, writing and numeracy overwhelmingly difficult Sam's philosophy was determination and a practical can do/will do attitude. Sam has raised in excess of £2,000 since joining MFT through his hard work and enterprising ideas. He did a sponsored horse ride, ran a charity stall in Sudbury and also did a street collection as well as growing hundreds of celeriac plants and selling the resulting vegetables. He's helped out at five sponsored bag packing events often working a 9 hour shift. Sam has a natural talent in caring for animals and shares this skill with other members of the work team. His attitude to work and his grasp of the main issues of running a charity have been inspiring for other volunteers and farmworkers. He is always keen to help people in whatever way he can and has been a mentor to younger or less experienced team members. Sam suggested the idea of doing a sponsored walk from Bury to Clare. This will be taking place on Sunday 20th April.

see <http://www.m-f-t.org.uk/samswalk2008/>

Sam has been totally involved in all the planning discussions and took on the responsibility of contacting the local farmers for permission to have checkpoints on their land. This is in the context of not being able to make notes or write letters; everything has to be done through conversations and then committed to memory.

Sam is fast overcoming these hurdles with support from his parents and MFT. He has shown what a young man can achieve and he has done it all voluntarily with true and steadfast commitment.

For further information about M.F.T. please see www.m-f-t.org.uk

Congratulations and Thank You Sam for your dedication and commitment and the credit that you are to MFT!



Sam pictured receiving his certificate from The High Sherriff of Suffolk



Checking the route for the Sponsored Walk

Rede Ramblings.

Autumn at Rede saw a good crop of squash & pumpkins, which have been readily saleable. Raspberries again performed very well.

During September and October farmworkers from both teams benefited from two heavy horse training days given by Nigel Oakley.

During the spring we are extending the soft fruit area to include gooseberries & loganberries.

The team have been busy making post boxes & nesting boxes when the weather restricts outside work.

Carl & Felicity have enlisted our help to coppice a hedge at Hawkedon, this will be completed in autumn 2008.

We have been planning for cultivation, cropping plans & new designs for vegetable markers.

Do not forget to support Sam's sponsored walk on April 20th.

Philip Mellor, Senior Support Worker

Old Hall Summer, Autumn, Winter Report.

Last June we were wondering whether the rain would stop to allow the hay to be made. Well it did eventually!

The MFT Friday team of Alan, Alex, Miriam and Sam were still helping stack the hay in August. This overlapped with early lifting of maincrop potatoes to minimise blight damage. After this we were sorting through the potatoes in the store in January and estimating we had enough to see us through to June with a few to spare for Miriam's treats for the cows.

We had two half day First Aid training sessions by Cliff from St Johns Ambulance. One accident scenario was a collapsed bale stack and the safe handling of the situation and treatment of a casualty. We also enacted an injury in the field with cows and were able to help Cliff feel more confident near livestock as he helped us to feel we could cope with an accident.

The winter routine comprised dismantling our carefully built stacks, loading hay on a trailer and taking it to feed the cows in the field, the straw spread in the yard and muck cleared from the milking parlour. There's always a fence to mend and the pigs ark needs reinforcing—Can MFT fix it, YES we can (or we know someone who will).

Philip diagnosed the ailing Jersey cows tummy ache as the wheat feed ration and she's been fine since switching to oats.

In February it seemed spring had already sprung but the weather doesn't seem to want to settle down - will I have to eat my words as well as my oats in my next report? Ian.

Grant Applications and funding

Much time and effort has been put in over the last twelve months by various members of the Committee to raise funds for MFT. Some applications to charities have been successful. We are also proposing that during the slack periods of the farming year that we undertake more contract conservation/ fencing/ ditching/ path-clearing type work. Now that we have a trailer, we have asked for funding for tools and equipment as well as the running costs that would enable this new venture to take off. We are confident that with the continuing efforts on fund raising that positive news will be forthcoming soon! New ideas for raising funds and generally raising the profile of MFT are always welcome as well!

Richard Hopper

Two new volunteers who joined us in the late winter of 2007 – Felicity Driver volunteer support worker and David Chappell committee member . Both are enthusiastic and committed volunteers

For a long time, I had been thinking about volunteering and my New Year's resolution in 2007 was to do something about it. The volunteer centre suggested MFT, because of my lifetime involvement with agriculture. From the first meeting, I liked the workers and support team and felt at home. In the year I have been a volunteer support worker, I think I have gained more than I have given. I especially value the ethos of MFT, particularly that it provides a permanent base for adults with learning difficulties, where they can receive long term training, work and enjoyment in agriculture and conservation.

Felicity Driver

As someone new to MFT I have been pleased to help people who have difficulties but want to do things. I appreciate the enthusiasm and positive attitude they bring to the tasks they set themselves. Since becoming involved I have attended various meetings and fund raising events such as Euston Rural Pastimes, bag packing at Asda, and helping man the stall at CWG, and participated in the preparation for the Redgrave Fen walk.

David Chappell



Events

Wednesday 9th April

7.30.p.m. bimonthly MFT meeting at The Wagon and Horses Acton Square Sudbury. Guests welcome.

Phone Pat 01359 232903

Sunday 20th April

Farmworker Sam Cook leading a sponsored walk Bury to Clare (18.5 miles)

Open to all . Participants can choose to do just 5 mile or 10 mile section.

Phone Sam/David on 01787 237460 for further information

Sunday 11th May

MFT stall at South Suffolk show, Ampton near Bury St. Edmunds

Saturday 9th August

Practical felt making workshop, Rede Hall Farm 10-4p.m. contact Bernadette 01359 230498

WITH MANY MANY THANKS!

M.F.T. cannot survive without your support and so many thanks are due for: -

donations received from— Stowmarket Catholic Church, Claas Uk Ltd, Mr B. Martin and Mr M Ereira-Guyer.

MFT gratefully acknowledge support in recent months from Band Q, Sainsbury's plc, CWG (Central Wool Growers, Bury), SB Surveyors, Stowe Vets.

Suffolk Single Gateway continue to support M.F.T. and have awarded £5,000 towards farmworker training for 2008.

And ALSO to all our supporters and donors as well as the volunteer centre centres, the community car drivers, volunteer car drivers and our hosts farms. Your ongoing support is much appreciated and a big THANK YOU! To you all.

MFT and what it means to me—an interview with David Armsby

Do you enjoy working at M.F.T.?

I enjoy working at M.F.T

Tell us about some of the jobs you have done with M.F.T.

I have worked in the field and I have cut down trees

Which jobs have you liked the best?

Sawing trees

Do you like animals? Which animals (belonging to Nigel Oakley) are your favourites here at Rede?

I like animals. I like the horses here.

What job have you done today and which tools did you use?

I was cutting down trees with a saw and (I also used) loppers (Coppicing 19th Feb)

Can you tell me about the safety gear we need to wear when coppicing?

I wore a hard hat and leather gloves, I wore steel toed boots and safety goggles.

Tell me about the jobs you have helped your Dad with at home in his workshop

I helped pump up the tyre on my trailer

What jobs have you done in the MFT workshop?

I've been painting a birdhouse, bootjacks, a post box and Nigel's plough.

What have you made?

I made painted horseshoe

Tell us about the vegetables you planted and grew last summer at Rede.

Carrots and strawberries, raspberries and onions.

What will we be transplanting next week (end of Feb)?

Raspberries.

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and from MFT David Armsby first visited MFT in Dec 2006 and joined the MFT work team on Tuesdays, in January 2007 whilst in the sixth form at school. Since September 2007 David also works at Snakehall Farm near Newmarket and attends Cambridge Regional College.

Keen on farm machinery and animals David is an enthusiastic team member and has worked hard with fencing, planting leeks, onions, squash etc coppicing and woodwork. He enjoys doing his reports on his new computer.

and finally from David's parents

Of course you are welcome to feature David in the newsletter. As parents we think MFT is amazing. As well as giving David lots of new friends, he has been introduced to so many outdoor activities; all of which he has thoroughly enjoyed.



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Telephone Bernadette on 01359 230498
Or Pat on 01359 232903**

If you haven't looked at the MFT website lately or just want to find out more about the Trust, visit m-f-t.org.uk next time you are on the Internet. You will find lots of information about our achievements and information is continually being added. See you soon!
Yuk Lun