



# NEWSLETTER

www.dawnay.co.uk

15<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Spring 2008

## Welcome to the Spring Newsletter

Last time I was staying Forrester's Lodge, I was asking after other guests and was told about an Ex-Head of one of the larger Intelligence Agencies. I had visions of some Ealing Comedy as poor secret service agents dressed in ill fitting tweeds and brand new Barbour's tried to blend into Danby society. I wondered how they would enjoy patrolling the Moors, trying to hide their earpieces and the tools of their trade as their boss relaxed in the Lodge. Sadly there was no such entertainment, to make things worse I am told the Ex Spy charmed everyone he met.

*The Viscount Downe*

## A Postcard from St Helen's

Winter on the Caravan Park is in our minds eye, snow and sunshine, with children building snow men, and Mum and Dad walking in the winter sunshine. In reality burst pipes, soggy grass and children covered in mud. Such was life at St Helen's in the Park this winter.



Christmas, New Year, and the February half term, were in fact very pleasant. The sun did peep through, the ground was hard enough to drive over, but there was a lack of snow and ice. Our stock of rock salt has been untouched now for nearly two years, and will be going cheap on ebay. Our snow plough blade was greased and fitted but also lay idle.

*Children can be seen doing Tarzan and Jane impressions all day long.*



February saw us back to reality with a bump. We had justified the purchase of a new small tractor with the promise that we would look after our own groundworks in future. The installation of a 40 metre long "zip slide", and a new "basket swing" tested the abilities of both man and machine. Barry and I muffled ourselves in layers of duffel coats and the girls made cocoa, whilst some 40 tons of top soil and sand was removed. The new toys were installed, and ready, for Easter. They immediately proved to be a big hit. Children can be seen doing Tarzan and Jane impressions all day long.

Reality hit us hard with the earliest Easter since Noah's Ark, and rain, snow and sleet in abundance. The grass resembled areas of Flanders in 1916, and

many washed out families gave up by Sunday. However, those that made it through to Monday and Tuesday, dried out enough to pretend that they had enjoyed themselves. Luckily, the next time Easter comes this early it will be

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## Welcome to...

*Tim Beak*, who has taken over as the new butler at Wykeham Abbey. Tim has lived in Wykeham for many years and is well known on the Estate.

*Sandra Robinson*, is holding the fort at the Estate Office while Emma Welbourn is on Maternity Leave. Sandra will be the main point of contact for shooting parties and Forrester's Lodge.

*Linda Hartley*, is working in the busy accounts office as Assistant to Eileen Biggins. Linda has recently moved to North Yorkshire from Doncaster.

*Carl Jackson*, who has commenced a two year Gamekeeping Apprenticeship, working on the pheasant and partridge shoot at Wykeham with Matthew Steadman.

## Farewell to...

*Janet Hodgson*, who worked in the Accounts office for three years and has taken a position at the Birdsall Estate; we wish her well.

*Trevor Siddall*, who has retired from his post as Butler at Wykeham Abbey. A tribute appears later in the Newsletter.

## Congratulations to...

*Linda & Bill Hartley*, shortly after Linda started work at Wykeham she and Bill were married; we wish them every happiness in their new life together.

*Emma & Phil Welbourn*, Emma is currently on maternity leave from the Estate Office. Emma and Phil are now

pr o u d parents of a beautiful baby girl, Violet Alice, who was safely delivered at the end of March. Violet is a sister for Ruby and our congratulations go to the whole family.



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whole lake's worth of fish into two small tanks on the back of a trailer. The magician pulling rabbits out of a hat, is nothing compared to the sight of hundreds of enormous carp emerging from a large bucket. Mike Heelis and I look forward to a summer of record catches!

Landscaping has continued with great gusto on the lake surrounds. A new concrete disabled access has been laid, and new fishing access to the Trout Lake has improved the useable bank side area. Mr Titchmarsh has obviously paid a visit to the CL caravan park, with new shrub beds interspersed with colourful gravel. I didn't know that Lynn and Paul had such talent.

*The magician pulling rabbits out of a hat, is nothing compared to the sight of hundreds of enormous carp emerging from a large bucket*

someone else's problem!!

The arrival of the new lambs was expertly timed for Easter Thursday. (Apart from two, which slipped through the net, and were born in the first week of January, much to Lynn's delight. We must plan to be away again next year).

Winter at Wykeham Lakes has been generally quiet. The smaller lakes were often frozen, with only the Trout lake and the Pike lake remaining open throughout. The temperature difference between the lakes, at the bottom of the valley, and the Caravan Park on the hill, often results in a muddy caravan site but frozen lakes. Perhaps a swap Mike?

The main event of the late winter was introducing new stock to the match lake and the coarse lake.

It is always a mystery as to how the fishery sales team manage to cram a



Yorkshiremen are suspicious, obstinate, materialist, isolationist, nonconformist and blunt – and I like them as they are.

*Bishop Eric Treacy*



Those who can't sit still long enough to fish need to head for the southernmost lake where Wykeham Watersports has a wide variety of activities available. Their qualified instructors offer tuition in dinghy sailing, windsurfing, canoeing and kayaking, and they cater for every level of expertise, including the complete novice. You can book for lessons individually, in groups or as a whole family.



In addition they also offer a range of land based activities, including archery, climbing wall and low ropes. This allows them to tailor activity days to suit all sorts of groups from school parties to corporate team-builders; private bookings have even come from adventurous stag and hen parties!

Manager, Sam Usher, stresses that his aim is to deliver professional tuition that is both rewarding and enjoyable. They also hold activity days, offering adults and children a taste of a variety of activities. Bookings are currently being taken for kayak and canoe courses for 2008 and places are going fast, so don't delay!

Now, all that is needed is the sun to shine continuously for the next six months. We promise not to moan about being too hot or too dry. We look forward to the grass shrivelling up and to putting on our shorts.

Enquiries are always welcome by contacting me at the Caravan Park, 01723 862771 [www.sthelenscaravanpark.co.uk](http://www.sthelenscaravanpark.co.uk);  
Mike Heelis at Wykeham Lakes Fishery 07946 534001 and  
Sam Usher at Wykeham Watersports, 0845 4560164, [www.wykehamwatersports.co.uk](http://www.wykehamwatersports.co.uk)

*Chris Tedman*



The Dales have never disappointed me. I still consider them the finest countryside in Britain, with their magnificent, clean and austere outlines of hill and moor, their charming villages and remote whitewashed farms, their astonishing variety of aspect and appeal, from the high gaunt rocks down to the twinkling rivers.

*J B Priestley*

I am never at my best in the early morning, especially a cold morning in the Yorkshire spring with a piercing March wind sweeping down from the fells, finding its way inside my clothing, nipping at my nose and ears.

*James Herriot*

## Activities on the Estates

### The Abbey Shoot

The first full season of the new partridge and pheasant shoot has been met with considerable acclaim and in particular the Bedale and Yedmandale beats have shown some spectacular birds over the steep wooded valleys.



Matthew Steadman, the Head Keeper, continues to develop new drives to add to the Spinney, Park and Firebreak drives. In particular the new Gully and Jenny's Spring drives should present some superb high birds for next season.

One of the unexpected discoveries of clearing overgrown trees and shrubs in Yedmandale is Jenny's Spring. This interesting feature which has been carved into the side of a "dry valley" marks a strong spring which used to supply farms on the plateau each side of the wooded dale. The medieval latin inscription reads "FONS IN VALLE CLAUSA 1839." Little is known of its creator or the history of the site – we would love to hear from anyone who knows something about it, or would differ from the translation of the inscription reading, "The fountain in the enclosed valley 1839".



There is plenty of pheasant shooting to choose from days of 150 birds on the Abbey and Ruston beats or 250 birds on the Bedale and Yedmandale beats. In addition 150 or 200 bird partridge days are available during September and October. Prices are competitive and vary between £29 and £34 per bird.

More information and photographs can be found in the sporting section of [www.dawnay.co.uk](http://www.dawnay.co.uk)

### A House with a view(s)

Forrester's Lodge, the Dawnay family's five bedroom weekend home at Danby, has had a busy start to the year with almost constant visitors, pausing only for the annual maintenance and refurbishment. There are, however, still some weeks available in the early summer and autumn – a beautiful time of year on the North York Moors and Coast.



The booking agents for Forrester's have changed their name from Stately Holiday Homes to Countryside Holiday Homes. Another change sees Sally Snaith as the new caretaker; Sally is doing a great job looking after the House and its guests.

More information on Forrester's Lodge can be found on [www.dawnay.co.uk](http://www.dawnay.co.uk) or [www.countrysideholidayhomes.co.uk](http://www.countrysideholidayhomes.co.uk)

### A new beginning at The Downe Arms

Dawnay Estates are delighted to welcome Jane Abdenadher and Paul Bower of JP Hotels Ltd as new tenants at the Downe Arms, Wykeham. They arrived in February and immediately started a year long programme of refurbishment and improvement.

The bar and restaurant have already had a facelift, and the addition of comfy chairs and window seats to the south facing dining room has given it a friendly bistro feel. Meanwhile local tradesman Dan Loughran of Snainton has carried out the re-upholstering in the bar; regulars proclaim: 'it looks better than ever!'



Renovations have begun on all ten bedrooms, including three new superior rooms. A recent flurry of wedding bookings has also prompted the creation of a Bridal suite. The hotel has impressive conference facilities for a Country Inn; its two function rooms, the Kings Jewel and the Park Room accommodate conferences for up to 150 delegates and wedding receptions of up to 120 seated guests.

Other more unusual events have included a lecture evening by the explorer Ben Saunders, and of course the Farmers Market which takes place in the grounds every Friday morning.

Jane is responsible for the day to day management and is relishing the challenge of transforming the Hotel. Her commitment is already evident and hopefully will soon be acknowledged with 3 star accreditation. The building is a 17th century former farmhouse and its location is such that nearly every window has a different countryside view.

Jane was delighted to appoint a new chef, Andrew Croft, a local man, most recently Sous Chef at The Palm Court Hotel, Scarborough.



Keep up to date with the changes on [www.downearmshotel.co.uk](http://www.downearmshotel.co.uk)

## In Our Community

### Nimrod – the mighty warrior

The 11th Viscount Downe was a car enthusiast with a special interest in Aston Martins. He owned a DB2 by the time he started Oxford University and later formed Dawnay Racing, racing Aston Martins, Ferraris, a Ford Mustang and a Ford GT40.



In 1981 he sold the GT40 to purchase an Aston Martin Nimrod, a racing car with a V8 engine, 560 bhp and with a top speed of 220mph. The Nimrod was raced between 1981 and 1984, with the most successful year being 1982 when it came third in the World Sports Car Championship and was the first British Car home in the Le Mans 24 hour race, coming seventh overall.

Nimrod's entry at Le Mans was really a throwback to another era, an English peer's own private team. The "Bentley Boys" would have been proud. This said, the Team Manager joked that the team was run on a budget equal to Porsche's catering expenditure!

The Viscountess Downe, who is the President of the Aston Martin Owners Club, has recently arranged for the Nimrod to be loaned to the British Heritage Motor Museum in Gaydon, Warwickshire. It makes an impressive exhibit and is being enjoyed by visitors and museum staff alike.

### Boxwood – Quality woodcraft, Village Farm Workshop, Wykeham

BoxWood – Quality Woodcraft have recently relocated to Village Farm Workshop, Wykeham. Tim Clarkson and Sue Armitage have run this successful business since 2000 from their base in Little Barugh, Malton, but needed new premises to accommodate their expanding business.



*Each piece is handmade from a choice of wood including Scottish oak, mahogany and the most popular; black walnut.*

BoxWood specialise in bespoke boxes and chests for the country sports enthusiast. They initially started

producing small boxes to be used as cartridge chests or portable drinks cabinets. This soon expanded into portable shooting chests which are now their most popular item. The chests are made to order to fit into the boot space of 4x4 vehicles, with a choice of compartments specifically for guns and cartridges as well as refreshments, picnics and even a humidor for cigars!

Tim is responsible for the manufacture and design of all their products. He enjoys meeting his customers and takes great care to understand how they will use their chosen item to make sure the end product is functional as well as attractive. Each piece is handmade from a choice of wood including Scottish oak, mahogany and the most popular; black walnut. Ever conscious of protecting the environment BoxWood not only chooses its suppliers carefully, they also use the sawdust and cardboard packaging they are left with to heat their workshop in winter.

A visit to their workshop shows what a wide variety of products they have available. Also look out for them at the CLA game fair, but if you cannot wait, try their website [www.boxwoodcraft.com](http://www.boxwoodcraft.com)

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Previous editions of this newsletter are available on our website [www.dawnay.co.uk](http://www.dawnay.co.uk)

Further information on Dawnay Estates can be found on the following websites:

[www.dawnay.co.uk](http://www.dawnay.co.uk)

[www.wykehammatureplants.co.uk](http://www.wykehammatureplants.co.uk)

[www.sthelenscaravanpark.co.uk](http://www.sthelenscaravanpark.co.uk)

Of dogs: It's the one species I wouldn't mind seeing vanish from the face of the earth. I wish they were like the white Rhino - six of them left in the Serengeti National Park, and all males.

*Alan Bennett*

T'finest bloody fast bowler that ever drew breath.

*Fred Trueman, when asked how he wanted to be remembered.*

### Trevor Siddall retires

Trevor Siddall retired in December after 13 years service with the Dawnay Estates. He was first employed at The Downe Arms and latterly as Butler at Wykeham Abbey.

Estate Staff gathered in the Old Kitchen, Wykeham Abbey to toast Trevor and his wife Julie and wish them well in their retirement. Lady Downe thanked Trevor for his dedicated service, especially in his role as Butler during some busy times at Wykeham Abbey. Trevor was presented with a picture of Wykeham Abbey taken by the 11th Viscount Downe, to commemorate his time with the Estate.

Trevor and Julie have retired to their home in Sherburn and now have a new garden seat and bird table courtesy of their friends and colleagues at Wykeham. They will be missed by all those who worked with them and we wish them a long and happy retirement.

And then, the unspeakable purity and freshness of the air! There was just enough heat to enhance the value of the breeze, and just enough wind to keep the whole sea in motion, to make the waves come bounding to the shore, foaming and sparkling, as if wild with glee.

*Anne Bronte (on Scarborough)*