

News from the area

Education Officer for Danby Moors

As part of the Danby Moors Environmental Stewardship scheme, Brian Sweeney has been appointed as Education Officer for Danby Moors. He works in close association with the National Park Education Service in delivering the HLS education outreach programme. Brian is focused on delivering outreach to the local adult community whilst the North York Moors National Park Education Service will be concentrating on schools within the National Park.

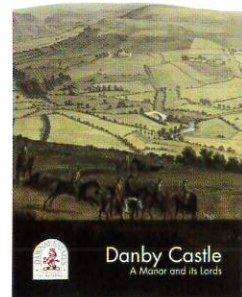


Since his appointment in May, Brian has carried out background research and had the opportunity to work closely with both gamekeepers and graziers on both Danby Moor and adjacent Moors. Brian has found this contact invaluable in allowing him to grasp the complexities of relationships between moorland keepers, graziers and other moorland users. Brian says 'I have been impressed by the depth of knowledge of everyone I have interviewed and I have a much deeper understanding of moorland management as a result.'

Brian is presently working on a number of publications associated with his outreach work for the Danby Moor HLS. These are targeted at the general public and assume little prior knowledge of Moorland management. The topics covered include; grazing and upland sheep, grouse shooting, moorland birds and heather burning. The publications will give a balanced view of the importance of sustainable upland management and the broad benefits of good management. 'The documents stress that good moorland management is good for conservation, good for biodiversity, good for the economy and good for the local communities in and around the moorland.'

As well as his work for the scheme Brian is also a lecturer at Askham Bryan College. He was previously a member of the North York Moors National Park Authority Education Service based at Danby and has lived in the National Park for 15 years.

Danby Castle, a Manor and its Lords



A discussion between Robert Sword and Carolyn & Duncan Bavister (occupiers of Danby Castle farmhouse) about publicity led to the germ of an idea for the publication of a leaflet or small booklet on the history of Danby Castle.

Lord Downe expressed enthusiasm for the idea, but who could carry out the research and writing of what was fast becoming a booklet not only on the history of the Castle but also of the Danby Estate and the Dawnay family. Dr. Gill Cookson, research fellow at Durham University who lives locally, came to the rescue and has written a fascinating account. She also carried out research on pictures, maps and plans and this has all been brought together by Phil Welbourn (husband of Emma, PA to Robert Sword) who has designed and arranged the printing of the booklet.

The Castle and the Estate has an extraordinary history with connections with families such as de Brus, Neville, Latimer and even Catherine Parr before she married Henry VIII. The Earl of Danby was also a notable owner, using much of his immense wealth in founding the country's first botanical garden in Oxford (now part of Magdalen College). His heir died leaving vast debts which led to the acquisition of the Estate, Manor and Castle by Sir John Dawnay and the restoration of the Danby Court Leet. The reason for the acquisition of the Estate was itself most unusual.

It is an enjoyable and interesting read and copies can be purchased by contacting the Estate Office or from the Moorscentre at Danby.

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Previous editions of this newsletter are available on our website www.Dawnay.co.uk

Further information on Dawnay Estates and its enterprises can be found on the following websites: www.Dawnay.co.uk
www.WykehamMaturePlants.co.uk www.StHelensCaravanPark.co.uk

Visits to the Dawnay Estates

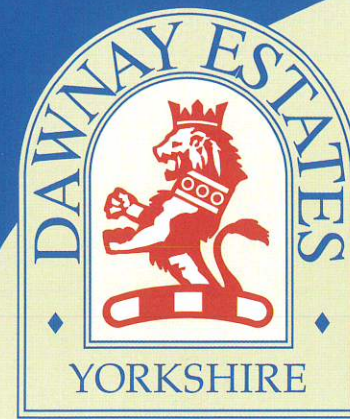
After several years of a quiet life, the Dawnay Estates seem to have become part of a circuit of visits. The Estates have arranged visits by Langleys, Solicitors, who hosted their annual "Farm" visit with a tour of Wykeham Farms, Wykeham Business Centre and Wykeham village and Wykeham Mature Plants. The afternoon was rounded off by drinks and canapés in the recently restored 19th Century glasshouse located at the nursery.



Scarborough Rotary also arranged an evening walk of the Wykeham Business Centre, the village, the Hillyard, School, Church, former Rectory (all designed by William Butterfield) and the Estate Office, a former LNER railway station.

Danby has not missed out with Robert Sword assisting with a training session at Danby Castle for the North York Moors National Park education department, and on another occasion the members of the North York Moors National Park Committee. The talk, which took place in the Court Room, Danby Castle was followed by a walk over part of the moor with Peter Snaith demonstrating moorland management techniques such as burning, bracken control and vermin control. Access was also discussed as well as the damage that is being caused by four wheel drive vehicles.

These visits raise the awareness of the two Estates as a destination, whether it be for accommodation, sporting, historical, educational events or business purposes.



NEWSLETTER

www.dawnay.co.uk

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Summer 2010

Welcome to the Summer newsletter

In her history of Danby Castle Gill Cookson records that my Anglo Saxon predecessor in Danby was Orm (son of Gamel!). This made me wonder what Orm might have thought of the Estate a thousand years later, I suspect he would see Management as terribly liberal, though I am sure he would have respect for the Cooperative's farming methods.

The Viscount Downe

Looking after the land: stewardship in action



As indicated in Lord Downe's introduction his Dawnay ancestors have been managing land for quite a while. In recent years the day to day management of the farming has been subcontracted to Co-operative Farms. Co-operative Farms are no newcomers to agriculture as they have been farming since 1896. The Co-operative is like the Dawnay Estates in that they have a very strong sense of social and environmental responsibility. The Dawnay Estates

and Co-operative Farms therefore make excellent partners and the 2,500 acres of arable land on the Estates, managed by Co-operative Farms are in good hands.

Environmental Stewardship (ES) is an 'agri-environmental' government scheme, and five years ago the Co-operative farms undertook Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) for nine farms that it owns or manages across England. Co-operative Farms manager David Edwards is based at the Estate Office and is responsible for Wykeham Farms, but his work extends well beyond Yorkshire. David has recently co-ordinated a major review of the Co-op Farms ELS schemes, visiting sites as far south as Gloucestershire to assess the impact of the schemes so far.

David explains: "Environmental Stewardship rewards land managers - including farmers - who implement effective, environmentally responsible policies."

The primary objectives of the government initiative are wildlife conservation; maintenance and improvement of landscape quality and character; protection and preservation of archaeological features (including traditional farm buildings); promotion of public access and understanding of countryside issues; and natural resource protection, including improving water quality and reducing erosion and run-off. Secondary objectives include genetic conservation and flood management.

In addition to assessing the impact of ELS, David is also advising the directors of Wykeham Farms regarding the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. This expires in October of this year and will be replaced by a combination of ELS and HLS - Higher Level Stewardship.

It should not be forgotten that the primary purpose of the farming business is to produce a profit from a mix of arable crops such as wheat, oilseed rape, spring beans, potatoes and fallow. But whilst profit is essential to ensure a viable and thriving business, Environmental Stewardship is a good example of how commercial farming can work hand in hand with conservation.

Ultimately the schemes benefit the land by increasing biodiversity within Wykeham Farms, and as a consequence benefits the shoot by providing a habitat and food source for wild partridge and pheasant: a great example of what can be achieved by working for, and respecting the environment.

Welcome to...

Matthew Nesfield who has recently joined the Wykeham



Shoot as an under keeper. Matthew comes from a long line of Nesfield keepers, two of whom were former keepers of the Dawnay Estates. His father was born at Wykeham and his great uncle, Steve Nesfield, was the head keeper at Danby for many years.

Sandra Robinson who now has a permanent position at the Estate Office, following several temporary



assignments. Sandra is an accounts administrator and we are delighted she has joined us on a permanent basis.

Farewell to...

Dick Cockerill, who died recently, lived all his life on the Wykeham Estate firstly at Ruston and then at Wykeham. Dick was well known to the local farmers as the excavator driver for the Muston and Yedingham Internal Drainage Board.

Farming on the Dawnay Estates

‘Udderly’ brilliant technology at Crossley Side Farm

The Smith family have a long history of farming in Danby area. They have a keen sense of community and value the traditions and beauty of the countryside around them. That doesn't, however, prevent them from embracing 21st Century technology. There is no greater proof of this than the recent installation of a Lely robotic milking system at Stephen Smith's Crossley Side Farm in Little Fryup near Danby.



The robotic system allows cows to be milked without the farmers presence. Each cow is fitted with a transponder which identifies the cow as it approaches the unit. The computerised records hold a wealth of information on each cow, lasers scan the teats and udders to build up a picture of each cows udders so that the robot can ‘handle’ them carefully.

Once a cow is in position the computer dispenses the correct amount of feed to it, brushes the teats clean, scans the udders to check the cow's position and then attaches the cluster to the udders. Within 90 seconds of arrival the cow is being milked. The cows are trained to take themselves to the unit at regular intervals. When a cow has a calf the robot separates that cow's milk for the first 4 days; increases the feed to the cow for the next 60 days, its peak lactation period; and then slowly reduces the feed to normal levels.

This is far less labour intensive than traditional milking allowing the farmer to spend more time in other areas of the farm, but the customer and cow benefit too. Each cow is milked roughly 3 times a day. This frequent milking increases milk production and results in a better quality milk. It is also kinder to the cow as the udders are put under less strain. The milk is checked for early signs of illness in a cow; for instance high conductivity can be a sign of mastitis.



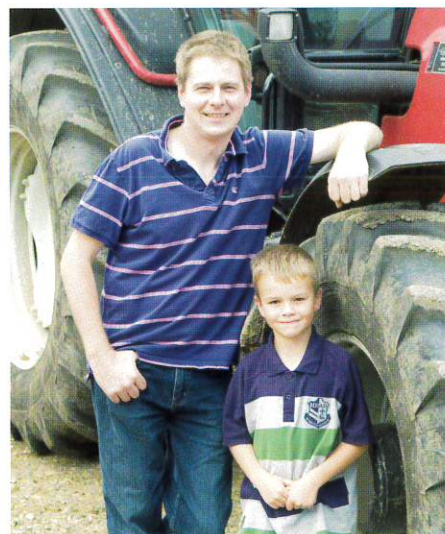
The computer produces reports on the weight and yield for each cow and also alerts Stephen if a cow is late for milking - this may be because the cow is ill or lame. If no cows arrive for milking or one becomes stuck in the robotic milking unit then the computer simply telephones Stephen to tell him! The investment of this unit on Stephen's farm indicates his commitment to dairy farming in what is regarded as a traditional mixed hill farming area.

Obituary - Geoff Stevenson

The senior farming tenant on the Danby and Liverton Estate, who died on 1 April 2010. Geoff took over the tenancy of Blue House Farm, Liverton on Friday 13th (!) May 1949, and was well known for his pedigree Ayrshire herd and also for his bloodstock knowledge. His Ayrshire cows won many accolades at local shows, but the pinnacle achievement was winning the Ayrshire section at the Great Yorkshire show in 2004, with a cow that still lives on the farm. Phil, his son has continued the tradition of the Ayrshire herds together with pedigree Holstein cows. Geoff attended 105 rent audit dinners in succession – probably a record!

Ruston Farm, Ruston

Harvest is almost upon us again, the culmination of our year's work.



Ruston Farm runs to about 500 acres in total. We were once a traditional mixed farm, but due to the necessity to modernise and the increasing cost of specialist equipment, the many and varied crops we once grew, including potatoes and sugar beet, have been streamlined into an arable farm growing feed wheat, malting barley and oil seed rape.

This helps to keep the machinery costs down for harvesting as all the crops are cut with the combine, but it does create peaks and troughs in the workload over the course of the year. Extra work has had to be sought in order to enable us to continue running our own machinery and we are currently contract-spraying and combining a further 250 acre farm at Seamer. You will also see us around and about on the Estate trimming the many hedges and verges throughout the year, as well as contract ploughing and cultivating for Wykeham Farms.

The biggest challenge we face this season, apart from the unpredictable weather, is achieving a fair price for the crops we grow. Farming is probably the only industry that is told what its products are worth, rather than us being able to sell to the buyer at our price. Due to two excellent harvests in Europe, we now have a surplus of grain in the UK, with prices £20-£50/ton below the actual cost of production. So, what happens in the furthest corners of the earth has a direct impact on the crops grown in our own little corner of Ruston and Wykeham.

David Shepherdson – June 2010,
Correspondent for Farmers Weekly

News on the Dawnay Estates

The Lord of the Manor's Flock

Recently the Danby Moors Estate has purchased a flock of 100 Swaledale ewes which are being hefted onto Glaisdale Moor. Why has the Estate embarked on this mysterious venture when the predominant use of the moor is for grouse shooting? There is a very simple reason in that the two are connected.



The starter flock will be built up to 310 ewes plus followers and is to be maintained on an area of the Danby Moors at Glaisdale which has lost its flocks over the last ten years. The Danby Moors Environmental Stewardship Scheme has provided the incentive and is assisting with the funding of the shepherd who will manage the flock.

The flock is being hefted on an area of the moor which has lost both its naturalised flock and suffered considerable losses of grouse from tick. The connection is therefore to use the flock as a “tick mop” as part of the process of reducing grouse losses from tick and tick borne diseases such as louping ill. This management technique goes hand in hand with the other graziers' flocks who are participating in the scheme to improve the suppression of tick through the moorland flocks.

In its first lambing, the percentage is about 100% which is a pleasing start to a very fast learning curve from the head keeper, Peter Snaith and his wife Sally, who have the unenviable task of overseeing the management of the Danby Moors Flock of Swaledales.

Developments at Wykeham Business Centre



Dawnay Estates have carried out a significant investment in installing a high speed internet connection that can deliver a dedicated service of up to 100meg.

Rural workspaces traditionally suffer from poor internet service, but this IT connectivity will provide a level of capacity usually only found in major towns or cities. Companies at Wykeham Business Centre will now be able to use richer and more engaging internet technologies such as VoIP and streaming media for telecommunications. The benefits are enormous enabling businesses to increase productivity and efficiency whilst saving money with highly competitive rental fees and no expensive connection or hidden set-up charges. The IT installation and 24hour product care is provided by on-site IT specialists C>ways; a company with many years experience and knowledge of the locality, being the first business to relocate to Wykeham Business Centre.

Business Centre Manager Katrina Shamel has also introduced ‘Hot-desking’ – access to an office environment and all the amenities of Wykeham Business Centre for an hour, day or week. These virtual offices enable home-based businesses to use a professional address protecting personal privacy and enhancing public perception. “Try and See” - contracts are available giving new and start-up businesses the opportunity to test the economic waters. The fully furnished offices with high-speed internet and telecommunication systems in place enable businesses to get in and get going within a day, without large set-up costs or lengthy delays.

For more information contact Katrina Shamel on: 01723 866600 or email k.shamel@dawnay.co.uk

Five Stars come to Wykeham

For the last 20 years, or so, St Helens Caravan Park has had a four star rating, or technically a four pennant rating from the AA.

This year, for the first time, the inspector came unannounced. He spent the evening doing what inspectors do, checking loos and pitches and generally poking about. In the morning he came to the office and introduced himself as the new inspector for the area. With the usual trepidation we waited to discover where he had located a broken loo seat, or found the only light bulb not working, but no, hey, he was impressed and complimentary.

As a result he recommended an upgrade for the Park to a five Pennant rating, or five star in most people's understanding.

This upgrade was not just because the loos were clean, or the office tidy for a change, but because of the gradual improvements which have been ongoing. The play ground has had new equipment, many pitches have been upgraded, and new hedges have appeared from nowhere - thanks to Wykeham Mature Plants. There are further plans for this winter involving new pitches, with more space, hard surfacing, individual water supply and drainage.

It's good to know that money has been well spent, and recognised by others!!



We welcome Trevor and Leigh as our seasonal wardens for the summer.