

The Village Show

July saw the reinstatement of a traditional show for the villages of Wykeham, Ruston and North Moor, which replaced the former Wykeham Whizz.

Blessed with wonderful weather, and opened by Lady Downe, the show was a great success thanks to an excellent attendance by residents, visitors and stall holders.



There had been a last-minute change of venue from the rather rain-sodden village field to the Wykeham Business Centre, which worked extremely well.

Classes included photography, art, handicrafts,

Jubilee Oaks

Wykeham Parish Council, on behalf of Wykeham and Ruston, arranged for the planting of two oaks (one in each village) in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Chair of the Council, Lady Downe, led the planting ceremony ably assisted by the Deputy Chair, Justin Terry, and children from Wykeham Primary School. The trees were kindly donated by Wykeham Mature Plants.

Danby Beacon Celebrating the Jubilee

On the weekend - or more precisely at 10.26pm on the 4th June - the Beacon at Danby was lit to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.

The Beacon was one of a series of many hundreds throughout the United Kingdom and was in fact



home baking, a dog show and a tractor run. The photographic entries were of a very high standard and there were some impressive thistles in the tallest weed competition! It was a delight to see



one of the last to be lit before the Queen herself lit the final beacon in Hyde Park.

A large gathering of people witnessed the event, and as Lady Downe lit the beacon, a cheer of approval resounded across the starlit moors.

so many local children taking part, including a good representation from Wykeham Primary School; particularly in the sports events. Planning is already underway for the 2013 show.

Concert Programmes at Wykeham & Danby

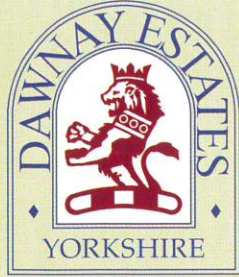
St Helen and All Saints' Church, Wykeham hosted two concerts. One was a group of singers from the English National Opera, singing a selection of operatic arias and songs from the theatre. The other was part of the North York Moors Chamber Music Festival organised by Jamie Walton, the international cellist.

The Wilan Quartet from Prague played a celebration of pieces from Smetana, Janacek and Dvorak.

It is not often that such significant musicians are able to provide music of such quality in distinctly rural locations - which might explain why the churches were full to bursting at both concerts.

Scarborough in Bloom

The Downe Arms Hotel at Wykeham was the category winner of this year's "Scarborough in Bloom Best Kept Gardens" awards.



Dawnay News

www.dawnay.co.uk

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter

The Estate's property maintenance programme is similar to painting the Forth Bridge. When one seems to be getting to the end, another property needs attending to. Over the last year or so, the Estate has renovated three major properties, all important architecturally in their own way. In these days when work so often involves reams of memos, it is very satisfying to complete these projects, so preserving the buildings for future generations.

The Viscount Downe

Attending to Historic Property



The Estate has recently been able to undertake the renovation of William Wordsworth's wife's old home, "Gallows Hill", the early 12th Century remains of Wykeham Priory and also the important listed courtyard at Stonebeckgate Farm, Danby.



Gallows Hill was originally converted and extended in 1903 to provide a well laid out and attractive nine bedroom house. It had not been refurbished for over 40 years!

These building projects coincided with the Estate entering into an Apprenticeship Scheme, supported and sponsored by York University, the North York Moors National Park and five local Estates.

James Brown, who wishes to specialise as a Stone Mason, has particularly enjoyed working with William Anelays on the Priory ruin where specialist mortar mixes were required. His involvement and that of the Apprenticeship Scheme, attracted the attention of Baroness Andrews, Chairman of English Heritage, who visited the site as part of a northern tour.

The renovation and consolidation of the Priory ruin (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) has been completed and the careful use of different mortar mixes and pointing clearly demonstrates the age of the stonework and subsequent "restoration".

The two storey high wall is the remains of the north wall of the Priory Church and dates back to the original Cistercian nunnery. The Priory was not a great success and visitations by senior clerics during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries



revealed shortcomings, culminating in 1444 when the Prioress, Isabella Westirdale, was found guilty of gross immorality with large numbers of men both inside and outside the convent. Furthermore, a nun and a companion left on a pilgrimage to Rome - which ended in the nun (Katherine Thorny) in the bed of a married man in London!

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Welcomes, farewells and celebrations



Goodbye to Molly Stirling, who has left us to pursue a different career, and a very warm welcome to **Caroline Bamforth** replacing her as Robert Sword's job share Personal Assistant.



Matthew Noble recently married his fiancée Kay while on a family holiday in Florida. They had a wonderful holiday and a memorable wedding day and we wish them a very happy future together.

Obituaries

**John Allen
1944 - 2012**

For more than 30 years the plumbing on the Dawnay Estate was taken care of by John "Leaky" Allen, the Estate's longest-serving self-employed tradesman.

John started work at Wykeham with Pickups of Scarborough. He had a specialism in iron pipe work and was involved in the major up-grading of the heating system at Wykeham Abbey. He was known as "Leaky" Allen by everyone on the Estate as he always had a tendency to leave the odd "drip" here and there.

John was a friend to everyone, always had time for a chat and was a man with a great sense of humour with a strong tinge of sarcasm! He had a passion for pigeons and bought a property in Osbourne Park, Scarborough with his wife Audrey. The location was perfect for a new pigeon loft!

John bred and raced pigeons and was one of the top breeders, not only in Scarborough but for the whole of the UK.

**Gordon Summerson
1930 - 2012**

Born at Limber Hill Farm, Glaisdale, Gordon started work as a Moor Keeper in 1962 on the Danby Moors where he spent nine enjoyable years. In 1971 he transferred to the pheasant shoot at Wykeham where he stayed for 21 years.

Gordon was a real family man who was happily married to Doris and together they raised two lovely daughters. He was also a clever man and there wasn't much that he couldn't fix; especially guns. He was often asked to collect a gun from Danby Moors, repair it over night and then return it the following morning.

One day, a team were shooting at the "Wet Hole", a small wood at Wykeham. One of the Guns shot a good high bird; "a wonderful shot" Gordon shouted, "who shot that bod?" There was a deathly silence, then Mr John Cundall quietly said, "I shot that bird, Gordon", the reply from Gordon was, "bloody good shot, eh?". There was a burst of laughter from everyone. It was a shot to be proud of and Mr C was delighted.

Attending to Historic Property ...continued from page 1

The Dissolution Survey of 1540 describes the Priory Church as, “90 ft long by 22 ft wide with an adjoining cloister (60 ft square)”. Sometime after the dissolution the Priory was “promoted” to an Abbey.



The Stonebeckgate building (Listed Grade II) is an exceptional courtyard of traditional stone farm buildings constructed by G and A Walker in 1832 who at that time was the owner of the farm. He must have been keen to make a statement of his desire for a modern farmstead with pigeon loft, kennels, pig sties, granary, cow byres, owl sanctuaries and storage, all connected to a private water supply and drainage system.

Mr Walker also involved a local Italian eccentric called John Castillo - the “bard” of the North York Moors - who also appears to have enjoyed tinkering with stone masonry and plastering. His epitaph is proudly engraved in a key stone above the main entrance.



These two schemes were supported by significant grants from Natural England who were keen to ensure that the Scheduled Ancient Monument was no longer a “building at risk” and the important listed buildings at Danby were preserved for the future.

Gallows Hill is now the family home of the CEO of York Potash (part of the Sirius Minerals), who has moved from Sydney, Australia to oversee the development of what may be the second Potash mine in the UK.

None of this work could have taken place without the skills of the contractors, William Anelays of York (the Priory ruin), Crighton Conservation of Northallerton (Stonebeckgate farm buildings) and the Estate maintenance staff and self-employed tradesmen who renovated Gallows Hill.

Sloe Gin

After a very successful crop of sloes in 2011, the shooting parties have enjoyed “Dawnay Sporting” Sloe Gin.

Production and the mix of ingredients is due to Andrew and Jill Kelly (with the help of their five boys) at Stonebeckgate Farm, Little Fryup, Danby, who gathered sloes off the farm to produce all 75 litres!



Royal Agricultural College



David Edwards (Co-operative Farms) and Robert Sword hosted a study group for the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester.

Approximately 30 students were shown over Wykeham Farms and in particular the Miscanthus production and the new corn drier and store.

In the critical early stages, the Danby Moors Environmental Stewardship Scheme is providing financial support for the project.

The project is an interesting example of co-operation between the Estate, Lord of the Manor, and the Graziers.

In the afternoon, the same group visited the Danby Moors where Robert Sword explained why the Estate has introduced a moorland flock of Swaledale ewes onto Danby Common.

The flock will help to reduce the levels of tick which can do so much damage to the grouse stocks. At the same time, it was explained that once the flock has been built up to its full numbers, the objective is to manage a profitable moorland flock enterprise.

Danby Moors...what a record!

2012 will go down in history of the Dawnay Estates as a year of great achievement with the record bag of grouse shot over the Danby Moors of 3,912 brace.

Records first started in 1866 and the previous record number of grouse (3,172 brace) was shot in 1890.

This important result places Danby in its rightful place as the second largest bag on the North York Moors over the second largest land area.

Peter Snaith and his team deserve much credit. Could this possibly be the start of a renaissance in the moorland productivity for grouse and all ground nesting birds?

Watch this space!



Danby Castle Celebrates its 100th Wedding

Carolyn and Duncan Bavister, the tenants at Danby Castle, celebrated the Castle’s 100th wedding recently when Catherine Culley and Graham Cook married on 6th October. The lucky couple were not aware that they were the centenary couple until they were presented with a keepsake hand-painted sign which stated the occasion.

In a recent press release, the bride said, “we knew Danby Castle was the place for us when we viewed it. We were so shocked when we were given the lovely sign to mark the 100th wedding. We had no idea and we are so thrilled to have been married on such a special day for Danby Castle. It is an amazing venue, with a fantastic team.”

Carolyn and Duncan are proud to have started a successful business at Danby Castle. They have over forty weddings booked for 2013 with many dates already booked for 2014. It is a real compliment to their good ideas and hard work.



A Terrarium for National Park’s 60th Birthday

The Estate was understandably willing to help when it was asked to host a “Terrarium” as part of a fortnight of events celebrating the North York Moors National Park’s 60th Birthday, particularly as the call came from Sally-Anne Smith (wife of David Smith, one of the Danby Farmers).

The terrarium turned out to be an hour and a half of dance and sound (representing the landscape) in a large clear bubble.

The bubble was located in the park in front of Wykeham Abbey and Lady Downe opened the evening in recognition of her late husband’s contribution to the National Park over the years.

Picnics were enjoyed during the interval, and the comments afterwards suggested that such a musical event in a wonderful location was stimulating and a clever way of representing Yorkshire’s moorland and coastal landscapes.



Ash Dieback Disease

You would have to have been living in a cave on the moon for the last few months not to have heard about Chalara fraxinea, otherwise known as Ash Dieback Disease.

This is a relatively new fungal disease, first noticed in Poland in 1992, which has had a huge impact on Ash populations on the continent. The disease, which affects all species of Ash, is usually fatal.

Although new, this disease appears to be the result of a natural mutation. It was not identified as a disease until 2006 and was until recently believed to be a strain of another fungal organism already widely distributed in the environment.

The first cases found in the UK were on imported trees in February 2012, but it was only after confirmed cases were found within woodland in East Anglia that a Plant Health Order prohibiting all imports and movements of ash seeds, plants and trees into Great Britain was introduced by the UK Parliament on 30th October 2012 to try to prevent further spread of the disease.

Unfortunately, it has since been discovered in a number of other sites, particularly in Eastern counties, and it is now fairly clear that the spores of the disease are also being spread by birds, insects, and by the wind, so it would seem that regardless of imported infected stock, the disease would have reached the UK anyway. Therefore, the battle is now more about slowing the spread than preventing it.

Most tree nurseries in the UK have been badly affected by these events as many supply stock for grant-assisted plantings, which will commonly

involve a planting mix with a high percentage of Ash. With the current ban on Ash, many customers are holding back on placing their orders.

Luckily for Wykeham Mature Plants, Ash makes up a very small part of the popular range, as trees are supplied to private individuals and for amenity planting schemes, so the commercial impact of this disease has been minimal and far less of an issue than with most other tree nurseries.

As for the long-term impact on the landscape, the loss of eighty per cent or more of the nation’s Ash trees would be pretty disastrous, with potentially a greater impact than Dutch Elm Disease in the seventies. However, the biggest problem with Dutch Elm Disease in this country was that there was very little genetic variety in Elm tree populations, so survival and regeneration rates have been very poor.

With Ash Dieback, although the mortality rate is expected to be initially high, there is a much better genetic range with Ash trees, so the potential for genetic resistance is greater. Also, since Ash is a fast-growing, colonising pioneer tree species, there is a much greater chance of recolonisation by the descendants of any resistant trees.

So, although the impact could potentially be disastrous when measured in timescales relative to a human lifespan, when considered over a longer timescale there is room for us to be hopeful that the Fraxinus genus will recover within the landscape.

Another tree disease, which has not had the same intense media coverage, is Horse Chestnut Bleeding Canker. This, combined with the further

weakening of Conker Trees by Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner, has been causing the slow deaths of stately Horse Chestnut trees across the country. This has been particularly noticeable over the Dawnay Estates and has already led to the removal of many mature trees on The Estate.

Although “Conker” trees are not native, they are a tree often planted in key areas, and a tree which everyone over a certain age will have fond childhood memories of. Although not a notifiable disease such as Ash Dieback, it is definitely one to watch out for.

by Martin Howe, Wykeham Mature Plants

