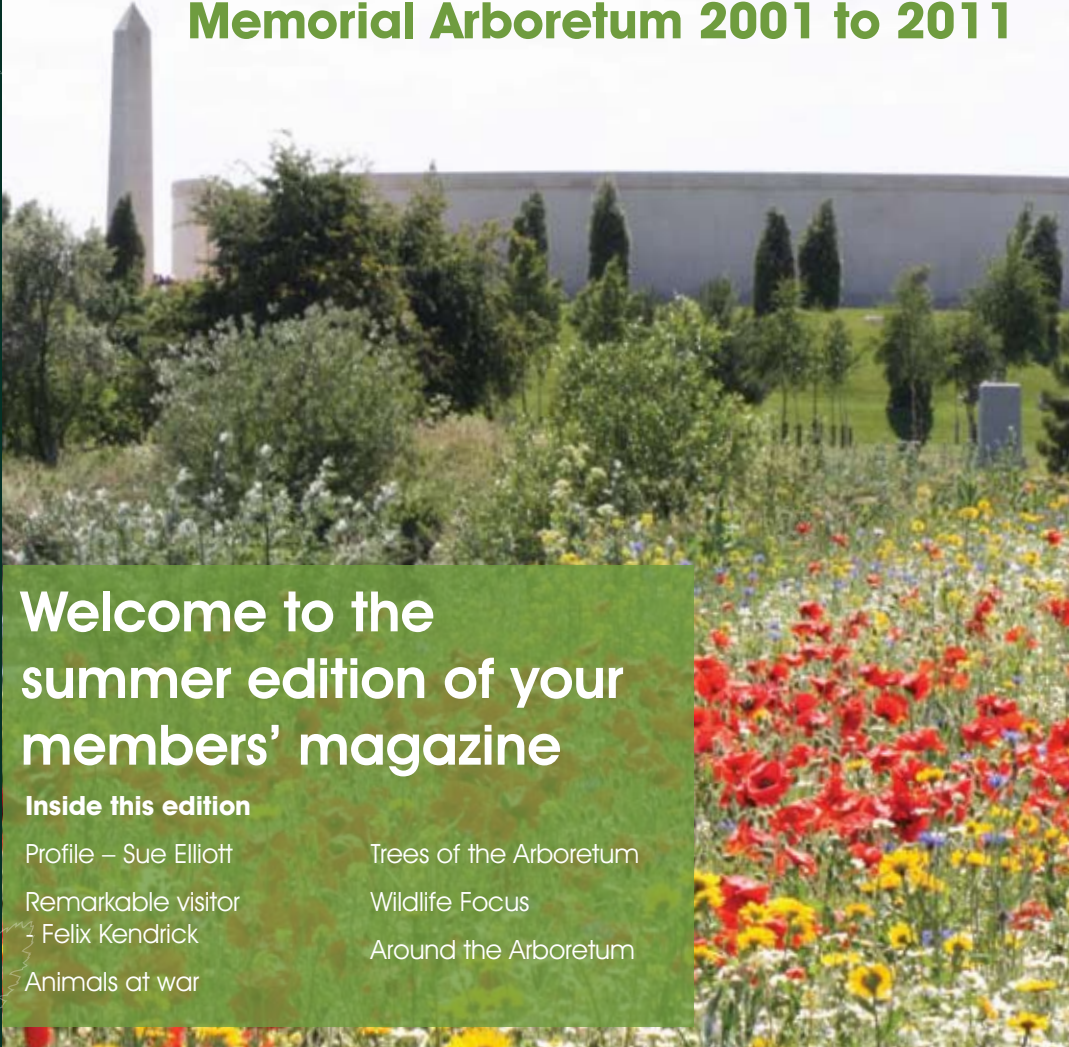




The Memo

The latest news and views from the National Memorial Arboretum Friends

10th Anniversary Year of the National Memorial Arboretum 2001 to 2011



Welcome to the
summer edition of your
members' magazine

Inside this edition

Profile – Sue Elliott

Trees of the Arboretum

Remarkable visitor

Wildlife Focus

– Felix Kendrick

Around the Arboretum

Animals at war

Where our Nation remembers

Welcome

Welcome to the summer edition of 'The Memo', your quarterly magazine. On page 13 we feature a presentation from 'the Friends' to the 'Working Weekenders' at the Arboretum and on the enclosed 'flier' is a membership profile which we hope you find interesting. Don't forget the 'Friend to Friends' page where you can let us have your own thoughts, comments and opinions relating to the Arboretum.

David

(Volunteer Memo Editor)

Foreword

We are now in the middle of our 10th anniversary season, and so many people who have come back to the Arboretum cannot believe the changes that have taken place during that time. What was once a muddy field is now a real national Centre for Remembrance that aims to become 'world renowned'. The 10th anniversary has provided an excellent opportunity, not just to look back but to look forward to our exciting building and long term landscape development plans. I hope many of you have been able to attend our presentation to learn more about these plans.

However, being a 'Centre for Remembrance' is not just about buildings and landscape. It is about people and memories - and furthering our understanding of the importance of Remembrance. To that end, working with The Royal British Legion, we have published a book called 'Lest We Forget: Remembrance and Commemoration' which brings together a huge amount of work that academics and practitioners of Remembrance have engaged with. If you would like a copy - it is beautifully illustrated and not a heavy read - please contact the Arboretum gift shop.

Charlie Bagot Jewitt

NMA Friends magazine, summer edition

The Memo - summer edition

Editor: David Bryant

Editor-in-Chief: Harpreet Jutla

How to join?

Contact:

Friends Membership Team
National Memorial Arboretum
Croxall Road, Alrewas
Staffordshire DE13 7AR

Phone: **01283 792 333**

Email: **friends@thenma.org.uk**

Web: **www.thenma.org.uk**

Charity no. 1043992

The Memo: Please note
all information is accurate at
time of press



In this edition of The Memo...

Junior reporter Ellie Ham talks to Sue Elliott _____ **4**

A well-known face from the Arboretum, Sue Elliott, talks about her involvement at the Arboretum and her days in the WRNS

Around the Arboretum _____ **6**

Origins of Remembrance – Great War Memorials

Felix Kendrick _____ **7**

Roger Hailwood recalls meeting an extraordinary Polish ex-combatant

Trees of the Arboretum _____ **8**

Richard Thorpe continues his captivating series about the trees at the Arboretum. In this edition we learn more about the Lime tree and its significance to the Arboretum

Wildlife focus _____ **9**

Read the latest wildlife news written by our resident expert, Richard Thorpe

Animals around the Arboretum _____ **10**

Our second feature in the series on themed walks at the Arboretum. This edition looks at some of the animals represented around the Arboretum

Whitemoor Lakes _____ **12**

An exciting new development close to the Arboretum

Friends present a first aid kit _____ **13**

NMA Friends presentation to the 'Working Weekenders'

Dates for your diary - our forthcoming highlights _____ **14**

An ideal way to keep up to date with Arboretum events

'Friend to Friends' _____ **15**

Talk amongst Friends

Arboretum Shop Update _____ **16**

The new 'Union Jack' range of gift ideas and the 'Book Shelf'

Please remember to let your friends, family and colleagues know about this unique Centre for Remembrance. Further details can be found online at www.thenma.org.uk



Ellie Ham talks to Sue Elliott

Young Friend and budding reporter Ellie Ham interviews Sue Elliott, a former “Wren”, member of staff and now volunteer

Q. How long have you been associated with the Arboretum, Sue?

My association goes back some thirteen years in total.

Q. How did you first get involved?

One day when I was out on my bike I just happened to see a sign saying ‘site of the National Memorial Arboretum’ so I rode in, found someone and asked about it.

Q. The Arboretum opened to the public 10 years ago, so you’ve been here longer than that.

I was a volunteer at first and the year the Arboretum opened, I got offered a paid part-time job, but in addition, we all gave of our free time and did different things.

Q. What was the Arboretum like then, compared to now?

Unrecognisable! It was a muddy expanse of ground. We started planting trees

that measured just 18 inches – they’ve grown a bit since then.

Q. You are also an NMA Friend and organise the working weekends. What do the Friends do on these weekends?

All sorts of things. In winter we work through wooded areas, check and clean plaques. In summer we clean benches, do litter picking, pruning the roses, plant bulbs – anything that needs doing. Paul Kennedy gives me a





list and I bring some coffee and we all bring biscuits so in a way we have a little picnic while we are working.

Q. You recently retired from the staff at the Arboretum, what role did you do?

I originally worked Front of House answering questions and guiding, and more recently I worked within the landscape side. In the early days the staff and volunteers did everything, including waiting on and clearing tables. The volunteers have been so much help to the success of the Arboretum.

Q. You are continuing your involvement here as a volunteer, what does that entail?

I organise the working weekends as I did before, as part of my job. I'm also working my way through areas, checking tree readings for the information we put on

the tree database.

I enjoy being outside all the time.

Q. I was told you were a "Wren". What does that mean?

"Wren" is the name given to girls that served in the Women's Royal Naval Service (also written as WRNS). I joined when I was 17. Now men and women are part of the same service, the Royal Navy.

Q. What did you do when you were a "Wren"?

I was an air mechanic, servicing engines and air frames. I worked out in Malta for two years which was lovely. I was in the WRNS for six years in total.

Q. Tell me about the WRNS memorial at the Arboretum.

The WRNS Garden was

formed in 1999. The Wren's rose was introduced at the Chelsea Flower Show in London. It was especially created to commemorate 90 years of the WRNS. Last year the Wren Bird carving was donated, it's very special.

Q. You must really love coming to the Arboretum. What's your best overall memory?

Goodness me that's hard! It's probably got to be last Armistice Day when I was privileged to read The Kohima Epitaph, not only in front of the congregation of guests but also in front of the TV cameras. It was a great honour.

Ellie Ham

Around the Arboretum

Origins of Remembrance – Great War Memorials



At the culmination of the Great War in 1918, the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission began to establish cemeteries and memorials throughout the world in all combat areas in order that individuals who had lost their lives could be laid to rest or remembered. Back home the desire grew to erect further memorials to the dead, most notably the Cenotaph in London.

However, communities throughout the country also wanted memorials erected in their own cities, towns and villages to commemorate their local casualties. Wherever you go you will see these war memorials, usually in the centre of the town or village, and often of outstanding design forming works of art in their own right.

Additionally, many large companies and schools also saw fit to erect memorials to their own employees or 'old boys' who had lost their lives in WWI. These took several forms - from a simple plaque on a wall to quite intricate structures with statues and other symbols. Sadly, over the years, many of these plaques found their way into builders' skips and were lost forever. At the Arboretum we are indeed fortunate to have some fine examples, such as the Phoenix Assurance and London & Lancashire Assurance memorials situated along Millennium Avenue as well as some fine plaques in the Cloisters area. Many memorials also had additions made to include those who died in WWII.

The intent of these memorials was not to glorify war but to honour those who had died. This tradition is now carried on at the Arboretum with the poignant structure of the Armed Forces Memorial.

Felix Kendrick

NMA Friend Roger Hailwood recalls meeting an extraordinary Polish ex-combatant at the Arboretum



One of the regular visitors to the Arboretum over the years has been Felix Kendrick, well that is his anglicised name, Felix is Polish.

In 1939 he joined the Polish Battalion of Youth and when Felix saw the consequences dealt out by the Germans to members of the Polish army, he escaped with some friends to Romania, then on via Turkey to Palestine where he was able to join a Polish Brigade. He eventually found himself involved in the siege of Tobruk. When

the brigade was disbanded in 1942 he joined the Polish Navy and, whilst aboard destroyers, was involved in escort duties in the Battle of the Atlantic and Malta convoys. He was severely wounded in a Mediterranean action and invalided out of the service.

In later years as a resident of Alrewas he made regular visits to the Arboretum and had some involvement in the placing of the Polish Memorial at the Arboretum.

After a recent fall he is in hospital, but it was there

that in December the Polish Government honoured him, when he was formally presented with the Pro Memoria Medal, "For outstanding contribution in perpetuating the memory of the people and deeds in the struggle for Polish independence during World War Two and after." This is a rarely presented medal.

"Did you know?"

One in four pilots during the Battle of Britain was Polish.

Trees of the Arboretum...

In this edition Richard Thorpe tells us about the lime tree and where it features at the Arboretum

The lime

Latin name: *Tilnia*

In the Arboretum there are two areas where this tree can be found. The trees which line Millennium Avenue are limes and these were cuttings from a tree thought to be in excess of a thousand years old, found in Westonbirt Arboretum in Gloucestershire. The trees which line

Yeomanry Avenue are also limes, and are alternating small and large leaved limes. These trees are dedicated to all the various Yeomanry regiments throughout the country.

The leaves of the lime are characteristically heart shaped and the bark is smooth on young trees. The small flowers, consisting of up to five petals, contain an

abundance of honey and have the fragrance of honeysuckle. In summer, aphids drip honeydew from them so it's inadvisable to park your car under a mature lime tree! They don't produce the lime fruit - the word lime in relation to the tree found at the Arboretum comes from the German "lind", the tree used to be called the linden tree.

The soft wood of the lime is ideal for carving and the figures of the Storyteller sculpture in the Millennium Chapel are made from this wood. The tree is not normally found in the wild, generally it is restricted to parklands and stately homes. One of the most magnificent lime avenues in the country can be found at Clumber Park in Nottinghamshire. If you were able to project forward by a couple of hundred years, the lime avenues of the Arboretum might look like that one!

Richard Thorpe



Wildlife Focus...

Richard Thorpe, our resident wildlife expert, tells us about things to look out for when visiting the Arboretum

On the evening of Monday 1 August there will be a Moth Trapping and Bat Event starting at 8pm. This will give us the opportunity to see many of the moths that are resident at the Arboretum, and also to detect bats which have these moths for their suppers! The event will continue until after dark so be prepared for a late evening – bring a torch.

Good news especially for bees – local beekeepers have put a few bee hives at the Arboretum. To reach the hives walk down the RUC GC Way, over the little bridge, turn immediately left and walk up

the side of the hedge until you see the hives. There is also a sign saying 'Beware of the Bees'. It seems that the Mallards will be nesting again near the Visitor Centre. Last year there were two clutches of ducklings. Watch this space... Also keep an eye open for early signs of the Sand Martins which have nested during the summer months in the river bank opposite the Pillbox.

In January The Wildlife Watch Group visited Croxall Nature Reserve and the children drew birds found there. These will form a montage for the bird hide at the reserve.

In March we honed our skills in wildlife photography and you may see some of the results in the Photographic Competition later in the year.

Finally, I recently saw a quotation which I think sums up the atmosphere of the Arboretum from both a nature and a Remembrance point of view - "We must always keep both eyes open: one eye on the world's suffering so that we can fight against it, and the other on its wondrous beauty, so that we may give thanks for it".

Richard Thorpe



Animals at war around the Arboretum

In the second of our series on featured walks around the Arboretum, we give you a taste of volunteer Gary Osburn's walk on the influence of animals in conflict over the years



The Polar Bear Memorial needs little introduction being one of the first memorials placed on site commemorating the 49th Division. Apparently when the division was stationed in Iceland during WWII, a patrol came back in covered from head to toe in snow. The commanding officer said 'here come my little polar bears' and from that day a polar bear was adopted as the shoulder flash for the division. However, on

seeing the first examples the Colonel-in-Chief decided it was not fierce enough and had it sent back to make it look fiercer. Hence it now has its jaws open.

The Red Paw Memorial is situated on the edge of the Ulster Ash Grove and is dedicated to dogs and handlers in the Army Dog Unit N.I. It is understood that the emblem of a red paw arose through the pawprints left by the dogs as they worked

among broken glass and debris that cut their paws. The unit adopted the emblem initially as an enamel cap badge and later as a shoulder flash. The dogs were known affectionately as "Wagtails" (arms and explosive search dogs); "Groundhogs" (tracker dogs); and "Snappers" (guard dogs). Each dog was given an official Army registration number. Some dogs lost their lives alongside their handlers during their tours of duty.

Simon the Cat, with his unofficial rank of 'Able Seacat' was found as a stray and was adopted as the ship's mascot by the crew of 'HMS Amethyst' in 1949. He was smuggled aboard and proved popular as an excellent rat catcher. HMS Amethyst became involved in the infamous 'Yangtze' incident and came under fire from communist China gun batteries. Simon was badly wounded in one of the first exchanges. The badly wounded cat crawled on deck, and was rushed to the medical bay, where the ship's medical staff cleaned his burns, and removed four pieces of shrapnel. He did manage to survive and after a period of

recovery, he returned to his former duties. The ship had become overrun with rats, and Simon took on the task of removing them with vigour, as well as raising the morale of the sailors. Following the ship's escape from the Yangtze, Simon became an instant celebrity, lauded in British and world news, and presented with the "Animal VC", the Dickin Medal. The memorial to the 'Yangtze' Incident is located on Yeomanry Avenue.

Civil Defence The first War Dog School was started at an organised level in 1942. By D-Day, 7000 dogs had been trained for many jobs such as taking

messages, sniffing out mines and locating people in bombed buildings. There have been seven Dickin Medals awarded for Civil Defence dogs. Here, at the memorial, the smaller stone remembers all the animals that were lost during rescue operations in the bombing raids during WWII, looking after people on the home front.

There are many more memorials featuring animals at war around the Arboretum.

For more information about Gary's walk, please check our website or call us on 01283 792 333.



Wood you believe it?

World class facility takes shape at Whitemoor Lakes, Alrewas



If you have visited the National Memorial Arboretum since November you cannot fail to have noticed the sudden appearance of some magnificent timber buildings overlooking the traffic island opposite the Arboretum.

This new centre enjoys a most spectacular setting, offering views over pristine lakes that are a favourite with migratory and indigenous birds – a truly inspirational location.

NAYC / Action Centres UK run adventure and training centres in some of the country's most beautiful settings where children and young people, often from

very urban environments, come to explore and achieve through activities such as canoeing, climbing and low ropes problem solving courses. It was decided that Whitemoor Lakes would be the perfect location for a centre and it is due to open in 2012, but as any passer-by will see, work is well under way.

The land had been owned since just after the war by the family of Mr John Gilmour and Mrs Sylvia Gilmour who made the incredibly generous gesture of donating 25 acres of land to the charity NAYC / Action Centres UK. Mr Gilmour commented, "We wanted to make sure that any development of the

land would have as positive an effect as possible. The young people and children who come to Whitemoor Lakes will not only have a wonderful experience but the opportunity to develop physically, mentally and spiritually through a diverse range of activities."

John Whittaker, Chief Executive of NAYC explained – "Our aim is to provide opportunities for change in the lives of young people and we see it as an exciting coincidence that this project is situated a stone's throw from the National Memorial Arboretum." Visit www.actioncentres.co.uk/whitemoor-lakes for more information

Thank you Friends

One of the many generous donations from the Friends



NMA Friends recently presented the 'Working weekend group' with their own first aid kit. They often work well away from where first aid resources are located so having their own kit will provide a little more security. They have been told that there is no compulsion to use it - let's hope they never get to have to open the box. The picture shows David Millington presenting the kit to the group at the beginning of their well-

earned lunch break. There were actually 16 working weekenders on duty, but there are only 15 in the shot - one was in the loo!

A plea...again!

We are repeating the plea in the last edition that in 2011 we hope to improve on what was achieved over the last twelve months by again attending local events and generally

raising funds and interest; additionally, we will try to talk to others further afield. If you are able to assist at any events, would like to contribute in any other way or wanted to organise something local to yourself but might need a little assistance please contact your Friends.

Please help make 2011 the best year yet!

Dates for your diary - our forthcoming highlights...

Dates for your diary – our summer forthcoming highlights...

WEDNESDAY 1 JUNE TO SATURDAY 18 JUNE

Work by local Chasetown artist, John Haywood, who on retirement returned to his hobby of oil painting. The exhibits have been inspired by the Arboretum. (A percentage of any sales will be donated to the Arboretum)

MONDAY 20 JUNE TO SUNDAY 17 JULY

Bedbox, Blanco and Boots

An exhibition on young people who were conscripted into National Service between 1948 and 1963. Created by Nuneaton Museum & Art Gallery

SATURDAY 25 JUNE

Armed Forces Day

Events and activities throughout the day

SUNDAY 26 JUNE

National Service Day:

Including a service of dedication and parade

MONDAY 1 TO WEDNESDAY 31 AUGUST

Exhibition by Pensby High School for Girls as part of a social history project to educate people about the experiences of Far Eastern Prisoners of War (FEPOW). (Long Gallery, the Arboretum)

THURSDAY 1 SEPTEMBER

Filming for 'Antiques Roadshow'

To be broadcast on Remembrance Sunday on BBC television. (Please note: all items have been selected for this special edition of the programme so valuations on the day will not be possible)

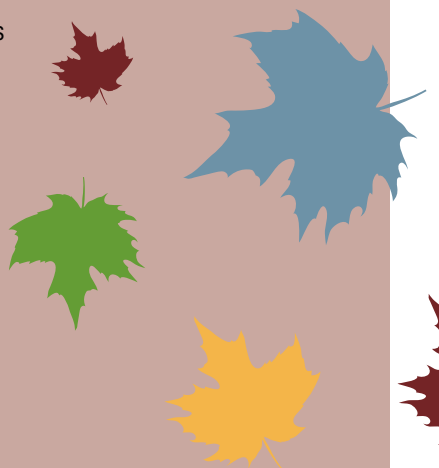
ADVANCE NOTICE MONDAY 10 OCTOBER

NMA Friends AGM

Rose Room, the Arboretum.
7.00pm – 9.00pm

For more information about these events please check our website www.thenma.org.uk or call **01283 792 333**.

Please note: all information is accurate at time of press



Friend to Friends

This is your chance to tell us what you think. Maybe you have an interesting anecdote about something you saw at the Arboretum; maybe just gossip or a personal experience

Betty from 'Ubique', who is also a 'Friend', writes;

"You may ask....what is Pewter? British Pewter is a mixture of metals with at least 92% pure tin, antimony and copper. The resulting metal is the 4th most valuable metal in general use, after platinum, gold and silver. Years ago pewter often contained lead, nowadays it is lead free and non toxic. It does not require constant attention, as it does not tarnish as readily as silver and silver plate. The 'Ubique' Collection, located in St Dunstan's Market Square, carries a wide range of Pewter military models".

Thank you so much to all the Friends who have taken the time to tell us how much they like the new-look Memo. Great to have the feedback to help us to ensure you have the magazine that you want. Please keep your suggestions and comments coming.

Do we have your correct email address?

Did you know that in addition to your quarterly 'Memo', Friends can also receive a monthly email update? If you have not yet provided an email address, or have not received an update within the last few months, and want to be included on the distribution list, please email

dmcdonnell@thenma.org.uk



Arboretum shop update

Fly the flag along with the Arboretum with 'the Union Jack' range of quality gift items.



Gifts include animal doorstops and paperweights, coasters, bags, pens, notebooks and much more, all in distinctive and eye-catching Union Jack designs

'Book Shelf'

From the book section, we feature:

'Evader' – Denys Teare

In 1943, after baling out of his stricken Lancaster over occupied France, Denys Teare became a wanted man. An 'evader' in the midst of the enemy. This is a courageous story of avoiding capture; the risks and consequences to the civilian population caught up in the madness of war when assisting Allied airmen and life in France under the Nazis.

Truly a highly recommended read.



When you are at the Arboretum, please don't forget to visit 'Knick-Knacks' charity shop for some fantastic bargains. Another great way to support the Arboretum.