



**The Lynchmere Society**  
For Lynchmere, Hammer and Camelsdale

**Summer Newsletter**

**Life President:** Michael Tibbs   **Vice president:** John Hooker  
**Chairman:** Michael Shaw (01428 643406)

**Treasurer and Secretary:** Robert Dows-Miller (07775 548309)

**Membership Secretary:** Louise Searight (01428 723715)

**Membership Records:** Stuart Ibbotson (01428 658179)

**Commons Wardens:** Stanley: Roy Wolfe (01428 723005)

Lynchmere; Judy Rous (01428 723251) and Louise Searight (01428 723715)

Marley: Chris Pooley (01428 653034)

**Trustees;** Robert Dows-Miller, Louise Searight, Christina Heath, Stuart Ibbotson, Nic Mann, Laura Ponsonby, Judy Rous, Ian Russell, Michael Shaw, Richard Appleby, Chris Pooley.

**Dates for your diary**

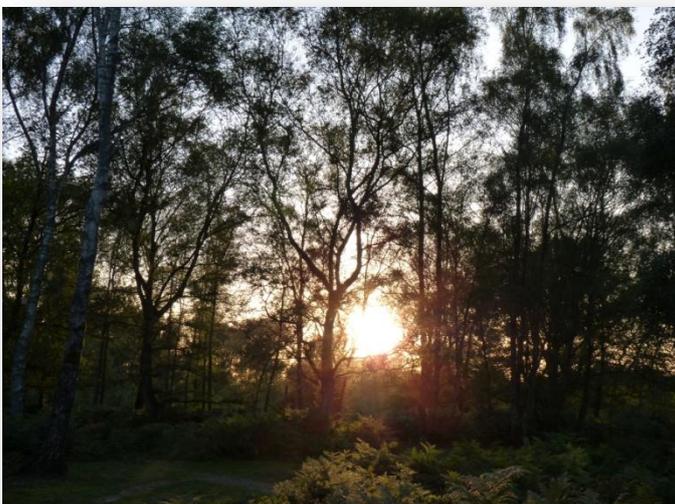
**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> September**

Fernhurst Furnace Open days

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm for 8pm**

The Lynchmere Society Autumn lecture at the Hardman Hoyle Memorial Hall in Hammer. Jim Jones of the Surrey Wildlife trust will speak on *Dormice, Hedgerows and Landscape Connectivity*. Dormice are an interesting, endangered and heavily protected species and The Lynchmere Society is busy trying to improve their local habitat. You do not have to be a member to attend; indeed we welcome new faces and there will be a glass of wine if you get there in good time.

**Volunteer Dates for 2011/12 are included on a separate sheet**



Sunset over Lynchmere Common



Hedge-laying at Mare Barn

The above photos and newsletter editing by Sebastian Dows-Miller

## **Chairman's Report**

At our **AGM in May** the three retiring trustees – Stuart Ibbotson, Chris Pooley and Louise Searight were all re-elected. Subsequently we decided to co-opt as a trustee Richard Appleby, one of the more stalwart of our volunteers. He will come up for formal election as a trustee at the AGM in May next year.

It has been another busy summer.

On 25 June Mrs Margaret Paren the Chair of the new South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) opened our new Community Apple Orchard at Mare Barn at the Volunteers barbecue. We have some 30 trees mostly rare local varieties and they seem all to have survived the prolonged dry spell in late spring. We will be planting another 20 or so during the coming winter. The Orchard is now bounded by a new (dormouse friendly) hedge, the slips for which were given by the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species.



The project has received help from the

South Downs Joint Committee, The Peoples Trust for Endangered Species, from Chichester District Council and from many people and organisations that have sponsored individual trees and we are very grateful for all this support. We are as always grateful for the more general support we get from Fernhurst and Lynchmere and Camelsdale Parish Councils and from Natural England.

The SDNPA themselves are now becoming well established and we look forward to cooperating with them in the future. We have already had a handsome grant from them which will enable us to purchase a proper log trailer. This will be of great assistance to the small group of volunteers who work hard to gather the logs for log day.

Before the winter sets in we plan to have replaced much of the fencing round our fields and to have refurbished the rest. A number of you have already commented favourably on the replacement rail and post fence along the edge of the barn yard. Things will look even better when the fences along the Sussex Border Path on our land have been replaced. There is nothing further to report on Mare Barn yet – we await an expert's report on the way forward there.

As usual we are dependent on our volunteers for much of the work we do. The list of **volunteer dates** for the coming winter is on a separate sheet. If you are on our list of volunteers please do make an effort to turn out during the winter. As you will see from the list of dates, in response to a number of requests we are as an experiment arranging two volunteer days for Saturdays rather than Sundays this winter. And if your days of volunteering on the commons are behind you please think of offering to do other work – for example our splendid team of members working on the village archives are mostly recycled Commons volunteers!

The reverse of the sheet about volunteer dates contains details of **how to leave a bequest** to the society. Please think about it yourself. Changes in the last budget have in certain circumstances made it particularly attractive now to leave part of your estate to charity. We are very pleased that the Haslemere Natural History Society has offered us funding from one recent local bequest to them. We will be using this to establish another Hazel Coppice and repair some of our hedgerows (to improve the habitat for dormice!)

Our website is [www.thelynchmeresociety.org](http://www.thelynchmeresociety.org). It contains much information about the Society such as previous newsletters, survey reports, photos and volunteer dates, as well as a page where you can renew/create your membership.

**Michael Shaw**

**Chairman**

**Charles II and Sussex by Judy Rous**

A large number of members and friends attended the Annual General Meeting in May and were treated to a truly fascinating talk on Charles II (as he later became) and his escape from the Parliamentary forces after the



Charles II

Battle of Worcester in September 1651, two years after the execution of his father. The talk focussed on his adventures and narrow escapes in Sussex before he managed to reach the coast at Shoreham and escape to France. He was well over six feet tall and was dressed as a woman – and this in an age when such a height was extremely unusual even among men. So it was hard for him to go unnoticed and spies and informers were everywhere. But after a night at the George Inn in Brighton he made it to Shoreham, a trusty skipper was found and he embarked for France on 16 October in the coal boat *Surprise*. Captain Nicholas Tattersell trebled the cost when he discovered the identity of his passenger. Charles was not to return to England for another nine years and was later crowned on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1661.

Our lecturer was Mrs Helen Poole who trained as an historian and archaeologist and has worked in various Sussex museums since 1991. Her talk was extremely well illustrated and full of interesting and amusing anecdotes. When she had finished and answered many questions we were left wishing it could have gone on much longer. As she has several other talks relevant to Sussex she may well be asked to come again before too long.

**Dormice by Robert Dows-Miller**

One of the rarer and most charming residents of the commons and fields managed by TLS is the Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*). Sadly because of habitat loss and competition from Squirrels they are now amongst our most endangered mammals and are protected to the extent that they may not even be handled without a licence.



These are not to be confused with the Edible Dormouse (*Glis glis*), much favoured by the Romans, which are generally only found in the Chilterns, are grey and almost twice the size of *Muscardinus avellanarius*.

The availability of hedgerows is critical to Dormice as they feed upon the fruit, berries, flowers & the nuts found within them, use them to site their nests in which they raise their young and serve as a place to hibernate, which may be for as much as three quarters of the year if the weather is poor.

Earlier this year TLS was able to secure a grant under the Hedgerows for Dormice initiative funded by Natural England and run by the People's Trust for Endangered Species for the new hedge created alongside the newly created orchard and this is commemorated by the plaque on the notice board.

In addition, TLS will continue creating habitat by laying the hazel hedges surrounding the Burkitt fields and filling the gaps with new plants, this will not only re-invigorate them but create conditions that will benefit a wide range of wildlife, including the Dormice, and serve as wildlife corridors linking differing areas of woodland habitat. It is quite possible though that despite all these efforts you will never see a Dormouse as they are both nocturnal and dormant for a large part of the year, however there is one sign that the sharp eyed amongst you may be able to find, their discarded autumn food wrappers!



Unlike squirrels and mice, Dormice create a smooth surface on the hazel nuts they eat so if you find nuts that look like those to the left you will know our efforts have been successful! To learn more about them come to our

autumn lecture at the Hardman Hoyle Memorial Hall on Friday 28 October at 7:30pm for 8pm.

**Prince Charles and Shulbrede** by Laura Ponsonby

As many people know, Prince Charles visited Shulbrede last November in connection with the TV film he presented on the composer Sir Hubert Parry, (the great grandfather of Kate and myself and stayed at Shulbrede frequently). John Bridcut, the Director and Producer of "The Prince and the Composer" knew Prince Charles would be interested in everything and asked for a visit of 2 ½-3 hours.

It was a very stormy day with rain and a gale blowing – what we call "real Parryweather" – the composer always preferred it very rough, especially when out in his yacht. Prince Charles confided he too liked such weather.

The Prince's entry to Shulbrede caused some amusement as there seemed to be no response after he had rung the bell and he wondered if anyone was in fact at home until he heard footsteps approaching. I had been told not to answer the bell instantly.

The Prince was indeed interested in everything and he was extremely observant, so there was no lack of conversation. He was immediately transfixed by the display of Parry CDs in the hall and remarked there were several he didn't have. He was attracted by the spiral staircase, but I warned him it was very dirty and dusty. He admired the buttery, what we call the crypt, with its beautiful vaulted ceiling and central "marble" pillar. In the exhibition on the history of the Priory I drew his attention to a vase of Ground Elder, originally introduced to monastic sites as a pot herb and medicinal plant. I told him I made little Ground Elder tarts which appealed to him greatly.

He looked at the special exhibition on Sidney Herbert, Maud Parry's father and Florence Nightingale, a great friend of her mother, Elizabeth Herbert.

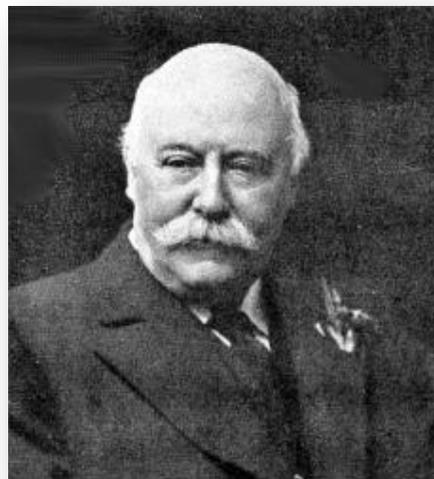
Upstairs I showed the Prince Parry's diaries and letters, as well as a wonderful selection of photographs, many of which were used on the film. He particularly enjoyed looking at Parry's "liquid refreshment when on board the yacht" – a wicker basket container with five stoneware bottles labelled *Brandy*, *Scotch Whisky*, *Irish Whiskey* and *Gin*. The Prince removed the stopper from the gin and gave it a good sniff. But sadly all the spirits had long since evaporated. He also enjoyed examining Parry's heavy leather driving coat.

The Prince was very impressed with the Prior's Chamber with its wall paintings and high oak-beamed ceiling (the summer roost of long-eared bats) and fine mullioned windows. As we stood by Parry's piano, a Hagspiel which he had had when at Oxford, I suddenly produced the original manuscript of Jerusalem and he was absolutely thrilled. I showed him various pieces of music including the *Shulbrede tunes for Piano* and a bound copy of the Coronation service for Edward VII, which contained Parry's "I was Glad", beautifully bound in red and gold. He very much enjoyed reading out part of Lady Herbert's nineteen page letter telling Parry why it would be absolutely impossible for him to marry her daughter.

I could not resist showing him two large piles of Harlequin ladybirds on the lintel of a south window.

Unfortunately it was too wet and windy to take him into the garden – Parry had a keen interest in gardens and was especially fond of visiting Kew Gardens. Sadly I did not have time to talk about Parry's great interest and knowledge of natural history – how he studied lichens and algae and was very fond of eating fungi (as long as they weren't tough or flabby!), how he spent long hours with his microscope and telescope and confessed that "music went utterly to the dogs"! And I did not even have time to tell him about The Lynchmere Society!

Shulbrede Priory is usually open during the late May and late August Bank Holidays each year. *The Prince and the Composer* has already been shown a couple of times on BBC4 and will be shown on BBC2 later this year – watch out for it.



Sir Hubert Parry



The logo of Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) indicates the Society's ownership of the Lynchmere Commons

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