

Porter Valley News



The newsletter of Friends of the Porter Valley - Registered Charity No. 1069865

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Forge Dam progress

Lots to report:

Café: I hope everyone saw the news about the Forge Dam Café re-opening in time for Xmas. Maybe you saw the Sheffield Telegraph article with a photo-shoot of May and Alan, FoPV members and local Councillors. I can confirm that the great British Breakfast is as good as ever. The café is now really snug and warm with a new, insulated, roof and double-glazed windows, no more hesitation as the floor moves beneath your feet at the threshold for the walls are all fully supported again! Our thanks go to the SW Community Assembly for finding the money to pay for this job.

Survey work: Consultants have now been appointed to work up the options for repairs to both the "dam" and its surrounding landscape. The SW Community Assembly budget did not quite stretch to cover all the consultants' charges which, following negotiation, was £1000 over the available funds. The Friends of Porter Valley's committee decided to invest £1000 of FoPV capital to enable progress within the tight timescale. There was no time to consult members so we hope members feel we made the right decision. The FoPV bank balance is very healthy and the cause is exactly what we should be supporting. We have supported other park improvement projects: for example the Endcliffe Playground had a start up gift of £500.

Of more interest is what may come at the end of the surveys with the options for the future of Forge Dam area scrutinised and consultations carried out. If repairs are needed there will have to be a major fundraising campaign like the one now nearly reaching completion at Shepherd Wheel. There will be an opportunity learn more at the Open Meeting.

Ann Le Sage



Faltering in the footsteps of 'Footsoldier'

Some things seen and heard recently whilst dog walking: the bulrushes exposed now the snow has beaten down the undergrowth above Forge Dam; the noisy green alien who has been living on the fringes of Bingham Park for several years, who made his/her presence known during the wreath making before Christmas and perched on our bird feeder on Christmas day; the magnificent icicles in Endcliffe Park waterfalls hanging on the ferns and twigs; the bright new picnic table in Forge Dam playground: dogs gambolling in snow, scooping up mouthfuls and barking at snowflakes. What has caught your eye this season?

Ann Granville

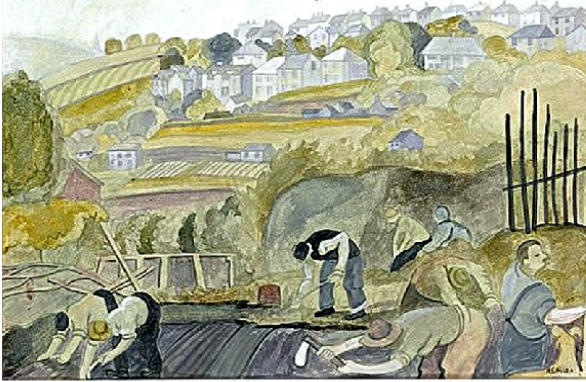
Progress on Shepherd Wheel Restoration

Since the restoration of Shepherd Wheel commenced in October 2008 we have seen many tangible elements of the work. It began with the felling of trees and moved on to the desilting of the millpond, the construction of inlet, outlet and overflow structures before the dam was re-lined and refilled early in 2010. Later that year the internal building artefacts were removed to safe storage prior to the building restoration and provision of internal services. All of this work is now complete. A contract for the restoration of the mill wheel and internal machinery has now been agreed and work is due to commence at the end of February 2011 and will take about 3 months to complete and finally allow "the wheel" to turn again. The final major phase of the work will consist of the new toilet and shelter block construction and external landscaping, allowing for disabled access. This work will enable the education aspect of the project to be undertaken. It is hoped that the official opening will be carried out in the autumn of 2011.

David Young

Harry Epworth Allen 1894-1958 Local hero and Ecclesall born landscape painter

High Storrs Allotments/Roughs (c.1921)



Harry Epworth Allen was born in the Ecclesall district of Sheffield on November 27, 1894, and died on March 25, 1958. From the 1930s until the end of his life, he was considered one of the foremost British landscape artists and his work was first accepted for Royal Academy exhibition in 1933. From 1907-11, he attended King Edward VII School, Sheffield. He took his Lower School Certificates in 1910 and gained First Classes (distinctions) in Arithmetic, Scripture and English-and as a result gained a Lower School Certificate Prize. He began work as a clerk at Arthur Balfour steel works in 1911 and a year later became a student at Sheffield Technical School of Art.

In October 1915 he enlisted into the Royal Garrison Artillery of and was posted to the BEF in June the following year. He worked as an assistant to the observation officer, detailing enemy troop and equipment locations and sketching in the field. In August he moved up to the front line where he was awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous gallantry. The King Edward VII School Magazine for 1917 has this: "*Private H.E. Allen (R.G.A.) has been awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous gallantry under heavy shell fire on January 25th, 1917...Unfortunately, Allen himself was badly wounded in both legs*". One leg was amputated above the knee, the other leg seriously injured by shrapnel. A year later he was discharged from the army on medical grounds.

He returned to work at Balfour but lost his job so he concentrated on painting, notably in tempera. From 1931 he painted full-time and joined the new Yorkshire Group of Artists. He began exhibiting and was elected a member of the RBA in 1935. Although Allen's early work is conventionally realistic he soon developed his distinctive style of simplified landscape and figure studies. In the early 1940s Allen published a series of articles on landscape painting. His work is in a number of public galleries, notably Sheffield, Wakefield, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Newport, as well as in Australia and New Zealand.

More information is available on the internet: <http://www.harryepworthallenfoundation.co.uk/>

Tony Marsh

Porter Valley Young Rangers—breaking news

The Porter Valley Young Rangers (PVYR) are joining forces with the Friends of the Porter Valley to run events and activities. Helen Carter wrote: We felt we would like to work closely with FoPV to support more involvement in a range of your activities by our young people and parents - this could include consultations, fundraising, lobbying and your existing calendar of activities and public meetings. So we are pleased to say that in future the PVYR events will be included in the regular list in each future newsletter.

Ann Granville

Christmas Wreaths

On December 5th, the Park Rangers organised another event in Bingham Park, making holly wreaths. Like last year, there was thick snow and freezing cold, but that was where we came in, with a stall selling homemade mince pies and mulled wine! A good number of walkers were out in the park, delighted to find hot drinks en route, especially as Forge Dam Café was closed for repairs. The holly wreaths were very popular too. Despite frozen fingers 36 were made and taken home free of charge. Our two Rangers, Tom and Chris, had brought along all the materials and gave help and instruction.

Flora Owen



In just over 2 hours the refreshments had gone and quite a few calendars and cards sold as well. We made almost £250 for Shepherd Wheel that afternoon.

