

Nayland with Wissington Conservation Society

Registered charity no.268104

Annual General Meeting on Monday 13th March 2017

Andora Carver's Retirement Speech

Thank you for your kind thoughts and good wishes. I have decided to retire as Hon. Secretary of the Society after 34 years, with slightly mixed feelings.

The Society has achieved a huge amount during this time and I have enjoyed working with Denis Halliday, Barry Wakefield, John Alexander and latterly Mike Hunter and of course all the other committee members

Tree planting at Horkesley Lock, the purchase of the Meadow, the opening of the footpath to Stoke, courtesy of the Tendring Hall Estate, not to mention recording the 70 plus timber framed buildings in the village with Leigh Alston, which became the Nayland Walking Guide and of course Open Gardens – are just a few of the tasks which have come my way. Not forgetting successfully bidding for the David May photo archive, which became the foundation of the Society's website, with masses of help from Lorraine Brooks and Wendy.

It has been a great privilege to be part of all this, as well as helping on the Babergh District committee of the Suffolk Preservation Society, and the Stour Valley Action Group. The list goes on and culminates with the Court Knoll dig – arguably our most significant project (with which I hope to continue to be involved).

However, it has become clear that my computer skills are not up to all this as a result of my illness in November and I am looking forward to “taking my foot off the accelerator” and combining light duties with some long put-off interests, and to looking after James, seeing more of our grandchildren and with luck a taking few more holidays.

Before I finish there is just one more special memory, I would like to share with you.

In June 2014 I was asked by the Dedham Vale AONB Project (in strictest secrecy) to represent an amenity group in the Dedham Vale at a ministerial visit by the Minister of State for the Environment, Lord Rupert de Mauley. A group of 8 or 9 of the great and the good of the Stour Valley assembled beside Court Knoll and I told them about the barn owl which had recently been seen there. Sure enough a few minutes later it appeared quartering the field – an unforgettable sight and what is more, he or she was there the following morning too. It doesn't get much better than that...

Thank you very much.

Andora Carver