

Community

Looking out for nature

THE children of College House Primary School's Eco-Club discovered a wealth of things to look at and discuss as they were taken out on a Nature Walk just before half-term by Notts County Council's School Travel Plan Officer.

The 17 members of the Eco-Club spanned school Years 4 to 6. They were all eager to stop, look, listen and learn even more about the world around them as the County Council officer, Mr Steve Stevenson, escorted them along Cator Lane and through the 'green corridor' before returning along Bramcote Lane and heading back to school along High Road, Chilwell.

The rationale behind these organised nature walks is to encourage more children to walk to and from school. Mr Stevenson had with him 'Walk to School Treasure Hunt' record cards ready for the young people aged between 7 and 11. When they returned to school they would complete the record cards, noting what they had

seen or heard, whether it be a routine sighting such as a double-decker bus (on Cator Lane, anyway – route of the No 36) or the less routine, such as the huge piece of earth-moving equipment sat on someone's front drive. They were encouraged to listen for and identify bird song, to look out for unusual plants ("Is that a palm tree? Here in Britain? Aren't they a species that belongs to a hotter climate than this?"), and for people working on buildings (What are they doing? Not sure? Then ask!)

Class 6 teacher Mrs Verey commented: "In class, we already chart how the children have arrived at school each day, if they've come by car or walked."

During the nature exercise, the importance of crossing roads safely and keeping eyes and ears open for hazards was stressed.

Mr Stevenson had with him 'treasure hunt' stickers with which to reward the children after they had completed their record cards.

On Cator Lane's grassy green corridor, the young people had been delighted to spot not one, but two grey squirrels. Murray Newbutt, aged 9, lives in Chilwell and often walks to school. He said: "This has been a nice little walk with lots of things to see. It's useful to look around and see what's around you and, if you're quiet and keep your eyes peeled, you'll see even more things." Murray identified five black-headed gulls and was intrigued by their presence this far inland, refusing to accept the old wives' tale about bad weather out at sea bringing seabirds inland.

Ella Booth, aged 8, was of a more philosophical disposition than her practically-minded friend. She said: "I think that, if more children went on nature walks and took the trouble to find out about nature, they would become more interested in nature for it's own sake."

"There are people who think that nature is pointless, but of course it's not," she said. "People need to learn about it and enjoy it as it's very important."

This led to a discussion between the two children, Murray and Ella, about the importance of bees and pollination, with Murray, who was hoping for a microscope for his birthday, promising to carry out his own research into what might be causing the bee population to decline.

Leading the walk, Mr Stevenson said: "The purpose of the Walk to School nature walk and Treasure Hunt is to get children to appreciate being outdoors and to appreciate nature."

He would have been more than gratified to hear the depth of the children's knowledge amongst those bringing up the rear.

90th birthday party!

TO celebrate her 90th birthday, Jane Fulthorpe laid on a magnificent buffet in the lounge at Yew Tree Court residential home in Beeston and invited her many friends to come along and join her.

More than 40 guests were at the lively party on Saturday afternoon, May 29. The Mayor and Mayoress of Broxtowe, Cllrs Pat and Lynda Lally, came along to present Mrs Fulthorpe with a basket of colourful spring flowers on behalf of the council, and joined the party guests for a while.

Born in Castleton, Derbyshire, the young Jane had moved to Manchester after leaving school at the age of 14. She then moved to Hathersage, also in the Peak District, where she joined the Auxiliary Territorial

Service (ATS) for two years. The ATS was the forerunner to the British Women's Royal Army Corps, and to have been a member carries distinction.

She came to Beeston after marriage and has one daughter and two sons, as well as, she exclaimed: "Grandchildren and great-grandchildren too numerous to count!"

After working at the University of Nottingham for 18 years as a porter, Jane worked as a cleaner at the Cadland Inn, Chilwell.

As she sat in the lounge at Yew Tree Court surrounded by friends, cards and gifts, she said: "I've worked hard all my life and I've made a lot of friends. It was nice to be able to provide this party for everyone here!"

Cancer challenge

THREE of Nottingham's tram drivers have recently suffered from cancer and two of them have died.

In their memory, Nottingham Express Transit (NET) staff are tackling the Three Peaks Challenge in Yorkshire on Saturday, June 19, to raise money for cancer research. They have invited the pro-tram campaigner from Beeston, Steve Barber, to join them.

Mr Barber said: "My mother died of bowel cancer 22 years ago. During her last few months, she was part of a cancer research project. Shortly after her death, they made a breakthrough in their research and survival rates increased to such an extent that opinion was that, 12 months later, my mother may well have survived. Of course that is probably not

true – cart and horses, if you see what I mean.

"However, I am delighted to accept NET's invitation to join them on Mum's behalf."

If you would like to sponsor the Challenge, visit www.justgiving.com/netandfriends.

Let's get Nick back!



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