



FORDE ABBEY & GARDENS



MIXING WITH ROYALTY

2007 began with a royal welcome as Axminster newspaper Pulman's Weekly News celebrated its 150th anniversary with guest of honour HRH the Countess of Wessex. Following months of visits by Special Branch, the Royal Flight and the Lord Lieutenant's office for Forde Abbey and a morning of visits to Colyton and Axminster for the Countess, a lunch was held in the Great Hall for nearly 100 guests including Pulman's owner, Sir Ray Tindle, the Lord Lieutenants of Dorset, Devon and Somerset as well as many members of the newspaper's current staff.

Thankfully the rain held off, the fire in the Great Hall kept everyone warm and the event was a great success. The Countess signed the Forde Abbey visitor book before leaving by helicopter for her return to London.



Mr and Mrs Roper welcoming the Countess

GOING FOR GOLD - AGAIN!



Following our success in South West Tourism's Small Visitor Attraction of the Year competition last year, we thought we would have another go this year - and have been named as finalists once again! The winner will be announced at an awards ceremony in Torquay on the 29th of October and we have our fingers crossed for it!

Newsletter

Autumn 2007

CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

There is no resting on laurels at Forde Abbey with the house closing on the 31st October and winter opening hours starting on the 1st November.

The Gift Shop stocks a range of high quality gifts for all ages featuring items from many local producers. A far more enjoyable experience than a day on the high street!

On Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays (10am-4pm) until the 16th December you can enjoy free entry into the gardens using a gentle stroll to work up an appetite for homemade lunches and cakes and some stress free Christmas shopping.

END OF SEASON SALE!

Many Gift Shop items reduced throughout October!

FORDE ABBEY RUN

For some people a gentle stroll through the garden is just not enough! This year 191 runners braved the decidedly sticky course for the fourth Forde Abbey 10km Cross Country Run.

Congratulations to Paul Rose who won on his third attempt with a time of 38.47 and to Heather Foundling Hawker who regained her title by smashing the ladies record with a time of 42.13



For the third year running the children's 1 mile race around the garden was won by Isobel Glaisher with Fred Parsons the fastest boy.

The event raised a fantastic £1500 for Thorncombe Jumping Beans Playgroup and St Mary's School also in Thorncombe.

Congratulations to all who finished the demanding course!

Not for the faint hearted!

A PLACE FOR ALL SEASONS

For all of you faced with the task of buying a gift for the person with everything why not consider a Forde Abbey Season Ticket? 2008 tickets (available from October) are priced at £20 per person or £35 for a couple. These represent excellent value and are available from the Gift Shop or the Forde Abbey Office. Once more Forde Abbey Season Ticket Holders will enjoy a discount of 50% on the cost of entry to Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens, Lower Severalls and Hestercombe. So give the gift of the crocus in spring, summertime herbaceous borders, changing colours of autumn and bright winter walks in some of the most beautiful gardens in the South West!



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE!

Daily rainfall accounts have been kept here for nearly 100 years creating local records for the wettest and driest years. 1921 remains the driest year in this corner of Dorset with a mere 516mm. The wettest is still up for debate but we need yet more rain if 2007 is to beat 1960 with its 1360mm of rain!



Unfortunately it was still too wet to hold the Forde Abbey Summer Fair in aid of St Margaret's Hospice. Thankfully, they were able to hold a smaller event at Brympton D'Evercy in August raising £2600.

TRAILBLAZING



Congratulations to 8 year old Joseph Blatchly from Taunton whose completed letterboxing trail won the prize draw. A prize selected from the Gift Shop will be on its way shortly.

★ 5 GOLD STARS! ★

Cleanliness is definitely next to godliness following Forde Abbey's award of 5 stars for food safety and hygiene! The visiting inspector was particularly impressed given the challenges of a medieval building with its hard to reach nooks and crannies. Visitors often ask to see the monks' kitchens. What they don't realise is we still cook in them and while the medieval chimney corner is still in place many of the current fixtures are stainless steel! Well done to Heather, Jackie and all the tearoom staff.

For more details about any of the events to be held at Forde Abbey or to enquire about concerts, group visits, weddings, receptions or private parties please contact the Forde Abbey office or go to our website.
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SNAP HAPPY!

The online photographic competition, now in its second year, has grown in popularity with a steady stream of entries. As always there are some popular subjects; the fountain and chickens are perennial favourites. But this year's winner, Martin Holehouse of Crewkerne, chose our newest feature, the Bog Garden bridge, managing to capture its intricate woodwork and



the lush vegetation beyond. Martin will receive £100 worth of gifts from the Gift Shop as his prize.

THE ABBEY NURSERY

The Abbey Nursery Shop's Winter opening hours continues to expand its range of herbaceous perennials, keeping pace with the latest introductions whilst maintaining stocks of tried and tested favourites and the unusual. In 2008 the nursery intends to further extend its stock to include a select range of trees, shrubs and climbers.

There will be an **End of Season Stock Clearance Sale** at the nursery from the beginning of November until 16th December during the Gift

Shop's Winter opening hours (Thursday-Sunday, 10am-4pm)

At the Axe Vale Festival of Gardening and Crafts in July the nursery was pleased to be awarded a Gold Medal for its display of herbaceous perennials.



The winning display

WINTER WORK

Once again the winter months will be busy with necessary restoration and maintenance taking place. The most significant project will be the stabilising work on the portico. The ominous bulges have been closely monitored since their discovery in the late 1970s when the concealing Virginia creeper was removed. So over the coming months a series of concealed anchors will be put in place to strengthen the walls and arches. While the existing bulges will remain they shouldn't get any bigger!