



Faringdon Folly Tower -

Newsletter July 2008

05 Jul 2008

Dear Friends of the Folly

This is one of my 'very occasional' newsletters to give you a mid-season update on Folly Tower activities.

You must have already noticed the fantastic new logo designed by David Henderson. We plan to use this on all documents and publicity as well as working with Faringdon Tourist Information Centre to introduce a new range of Folly Tower gifts.

July will be one of the tower's busiest months for many years. We plan to open Sunday 6th as normal but also Sat/Sun 12th /13 to coincide with the Arts Festival and Sat/Sun 19th /20th for the Sealed Knot Battle for Faringdon. Although we now have over 60 Friends of the Folly and of course, we're always on the lookout for new members to be able to open the tower on even more dates.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and many thanks for all of your help.

Eddie – 01367 241142

1. New Treasurer

I'm pleased to welcome Nigel Wilkinson who has agreed to take on the task of treasurer. He has already got our finances in order and amongst other things, will take care of banking, running the accounts and making the annual return to the Charity Commission.

To open the Tower, please collect the keys and float from Nigel at 22 Beech Close or call him on 01367 242809 to make alternative arrangements.

2. Building Survey - Report on the Condition of the Tower

You may recall that we were awarded £500 by the Faringdon Joint Environmental Forum (JEF) to commission a full structural survey and this has Andrew Townsend Architects have now completed the work and produced an excellent report. In summary, the only urgent work is to repair the roof structure and hatch access, and replace the roof covering. Depending on design and construction, the budget cost may be as high as £25,000 and the next step is to get quotes and secure funding.

The Report also indicates that to fully refurbish the Tower and ensure its long-term survival, we need to spend between £125,000 and £215,000 over the next 10 years the major items being the new roof and re-pointing the walls.

[Display text for an optional link](#)

3. Our Wonderful Woodland



We've finally received funding for the maintenance of the woodland.

We plan to remove dead branches from the trees close to the footpaths, selectively thin some of the Scots Pines and carry our general remedial work. This will take place towards the end of August / early September. I'm sure you'll agree that our woodland is a wonderful asset and we want to create a long-term plan for this natural area.

[Click here for an even better view of the Folly](#)

4. Folly Website

Thanks to Gene Webb for doing a fantastic job in setting up and running the website - www.faringdonfolly.org.uk where you can see lots of information about the Tower. You may want to take a look at the [Folly Diary](#) and information on the [Wildlife and Woodland](#).

5. Otway up the Tower



I know you'll find this hard to believe but on 5th April, the famous John Otway performed in the Tower to over 50 fans from all parts of the country. We earned £140 and everyone had a great time.

OTWAY UP THE TOWER – Report from David Henderson

Though John Otway the '70's punk-esque singer and performer who enjoyed brief stardom with such gems as “**Really Free**” , and “**Bunsen Burner**” (which reached No. 9 in the charts in 2002) would have you believe he's one of the music world's greatest failures, the facts just don't stack up. He has an incredibly loyal and passionate following and even in his mid 50's he can still pack a venue full to the rafters. And so it was with his gig at Faringdon on the morning of 5th April. Admittedly the Folly Tower's 80ft high Belvedere Room is quite small, but 40 adoring fans, some from as far away as North Wales still managed to fit in to see him perform. This quiet, unassuming man comes to life with a guitar in his hands and playing unplugged he half sung, half shouted his way through many of his best known songs, from the catchily titled, foot-stomping staple “**Beware of the Flowers (Cos I'm Sure They're Going to Get You Yeah)**” to the beautiful “**Poetry and Jazz**” which almost got the biggest cheer of the day. Almost, because that was reserved for the manic summersaults he somehow found space to perform, which brought the concert to an end. You have to see him live to truly understand the Otway Phenomenon, but for more information go to <http://www.johnotway.com/> You may also want to take a look at [YouTube - John Otway & Wild Willy Barrett, Theremin and Guitar Jam](#)