

Evenley Annual parish meeting report from Nicola Taylor, Evenley Wood Garden

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I am Nicola Taylor, Timothy Whiteley's daughter. I have taken over the management of Evenley Wood Garden, which was originally part of the Evenley Hall Estate.

Most influential houses had a large wood to help facilitate with the maintenance and running of the property. The Wood has oak, elm, ash, birch and beech plantings to name but a few.

In 1938, the Hall and estate was sold and split up. My father bought the Wood in 1980 knowing that it had an acidic area in what is predominantly alkaline soil. He then proceeded to clear the Wood and started planting the magnolias, rhododendrons, azaleas and a lot of different trees and bulbs. So started his vision and hard work.

The Wood has been sadly neglected for some time and it is testament to his imagination and determination that we can all now enjoy and appreciate this fascinating place.

He and my mother travelled extensively all over the world plant hunting; from the hills in China to large botanical gardens in Los Angeles and also down the Amazon with its abundance of unusual plant life, collecting seeds, cuttings and acorns which were put in various sponge bags and transported back home to be planted in the wood. Some were gloriously happy to be there – some were not!

He went on clearing and planting all through his life putting in trees such as the Davidii, which he would never see flower as they take 15 years before they produce their first bud.

He sadly died in 2017 and I took on the mantle of running Evenley Wood Garden which was a huge task and an enormous challenge but I passionately believe and still do that the Wood is his legacy for us and future generations. It is a wonderful and beautiful place which is constantly changing with the seasons but is also of great importance and significance to many botanists, plantsmen and women and gardeners throughout the world.

We have trees and plants here that are unique to Evenley Wood Garden and I truly hope that people from Evenley will come and enjoy this lovely facility.

Thank you,

Nicola

For more information, please visit our website at: <https://www.evenleywoodgarden.co.uk/>