

MINUTES OF MEETING OF FRIENDS OF TROOPER'S HILL, 18/03/2004

- 1) **Present:** Rob Acton-Campbell, Susan Acton-Campbell, Carole Edwards, Kit Elliott, Helen Gillard, Sally Oldfield, Liz Read, Norman Spalding, Virginia Spalding.
- 2) **Apologies Received from:** David Gladden, Val Harris.
- 3) **Matters Arising:**
 - a) First Aid Courses: Susan reported that St. John's Ambulance would charge £70 plus VAT per person, and City of Bristol College £37.50 per person. Bernard at the Dundridge Park Group has asked whether we would be interested in sharing a course with them; we could pay later, when we received funding. Sally warned that we must be careful, as grant funding was only for future events, not ones that had happened already.
 - b) Website: Rob has scanned Rupert Higgins' photos into the computer, and there is now a link to them from the website.
Action: Sally to let Andy Wilcox know that the photos are back, and that we would like him to take some more.
 - c) Tools: Sally gave out two extra sets of laminated aides-mémoires for safe use of tools.
Action: David to include an appeal for tools in our next newsletter.
 - d) Planning Applications: Susan reported on her visit to the planning office. There are no outstanding applications which could affect the Hill at present. She will scan the Internet regularly for new ones.
- 4) **Feedback from Work Parties:**
 - a) At the first work party (Saturday 14th February) since the last meeting, a new post was erected and the gate was rehung at Entrance no. 3 from Troopers Hill Rd.
 - b) At the second one (Saturday 6th March), the bracken and brambles on the steps near Entrance 2 were successfully cleared, and the steps are now in use again. Thirteen people helped. NB Susan reported that some of the stakes holding the steps in place have rotted away. This has been added to the Action Plan.
Rob reported that eighteen different people have helped at Work Parties so far.

- 5) **Plans for Next Work Party:** Rob showed the Group the latest posters advertising the next Work Party event. This will be the Spring Clean on Saturday 3rd April, starting at 10am. Gary will bring his van to take away the rubbish collected. Liz reported that a lot of rubbish was being brought onto the hill by teenagers.

The 1st May Work Party will probably be used for more bramble clearance from areas of broom.

6) **General Troopers Hill Issues:**

Following the arrival of new Group members, a number of questions were answered, which it is convenient to group under this general heading.

- a) Issues for Gary: there were no issues for Gary this month.
- b) FoTH Action Plan Feedback: Everyone was pleased with the plan. Rob said he will produce a final version and then review it again at the end of the first year. He intends to amalgamate the Aims sections at the front of the plan, and to include more information about wildlife.
- c) Interpretation Boards: Sally has made contact with Helen Adshead about working with the local school on interpretation boards for the Hill. Helen has expressed an interest in helping with this. Sally reported on current thinking in her profession re: interpretation boards and their usefulness. Good quality boards are needed (e.g. designed by an artist, based on ideas from local schoolchildren) other forms of interpretation should also be considered. It was suggested that when we are ready to go ahead, we could go and look at what other organisations have done (e.g. Willsbridge).
Liz reported that an artist is working at Air Balloon Infants' School, who is interested in doing this sort of work.
Susan agreed to be a contact point for this.
- d) Representation on the Group: Rob commented that we need to involve "dog walkers" if we can.
Action: David to put a message in the newsletter, inviting dog walkers to contact the Group with their views about managing the mess on the hill.
- e) Dog bins: Gary has funding for a dog bin, which he will put at the Greendown entrance. There is already one at the Malvern Road entrance, which does not seem to be emptied frequently: Sally said this could be because of a design fault which makes the bins appear full when they are not. There is a second bin at the bottom of Summerhill Terrace, which does not seem to be used, so perhaps this could be moved to another entrance. There is a chance that Gary may get funding for another bin later in the year, which it was suggested should be placed at Entrance No. 1 (bottom of Trooper's Hill Road). There was a discussion about signs indicating where the dog bins are situated, and different ways to raise awareness of dog mess.

- 7) **Feedback on History Meeting:** Susan thanked Carol for her hard work in preparing for and delivering the introductory talk for the history meeting. Carol said it seemed very successful, as the attendance was better than expected, and several people had asked her when the next history meeting would be. Carol has been doing more research in the Library. She has rung David Stephenson, the co-author of the Images of England publication on Crews Hole, St. George and Speedwell; he was very helpful, but did not want to speak to the Group as he was busy preparing a new book on The Dings. He does, however, want to attend the next history meeting, and said he would ask his co-author, Dave Cheesley, if he would give a talk to the Group. Carol also contacted Hanham History Society and gave them our details for future reference.

The Newcomen Society is holding a talk on the brass industry, including copper smelting at Crews Hole, by Joan Day at the Empire and Commonwealth Museum on 15th April. Carol will ask Joan if she can come and speak to the Group. Carol asked Sally how much she could offer to pay speakers: was it expenses only? Sally replied that £50 would be in order. Helen asked whether we could charge an entrance fee for talks; Sally replied that there were no objections, as long as we did not exclude people who could not afford to pay. It was then suggested that we could ask for donations instead. Or charge for tea, coffee etc. which we would provide. There was a brief discussion about suitable venues for talks. The Allotment Hall, Church, Church Hall, John Wesley Hall, St. George's Community Association Hall were all possibilities.

Sally said that there is £1500 available for "imaginative history projects". It could be spent on producing a booklet, having speakers etc. Carole has suggested producing a booklet. Susan suggested that perhaps in addition a CD with recordings of people who have lived in the area, plus photos could be produced. Kit said this was his line of work, and it would be possible to produce one; but a DVD or videotape might be a better idea. Susan suggested a separate meeting about this, as the money should ideally be spent by August. A meeting was provisionally arranged for Thursday 1st April, to be confirmed by email.

Action: Kit to explore the possibility of DVD etc.

- 8) **Contact with Other Groups:** The St. George's Community Partnership meeting is to be held on Thursday 25th March at 7pm. Rob and Liz volunteered to go along.
- 9) **Bank Accounts:** Susan said that we now have two bank accounts, but still no money!
- 10) **Fund Raising:** Susan reported to the Group that B&Q are offering £5000 worth of goods to each of twenty Groups (nationally). Susan has submitted an online application form.

The application for funding to Awards for All England seems to have passed the first hurdle of being in an acceptable format. The bank statements sent with the application have been returned. It is hoped that a response will be received in the next 6 weeks.

- 11) **FoTH Website:** Liz reported that the new web site is “coming along nicely”, and there have been several hits already. At present, the web site is hosted on some of Liz’s spare web space; it will replace the current temporary page when it is complete. Liz’s FoTH email address is website@troopers-hill.org.uk. Please contact her if you have any ideas for the web site.

12) **Any other Business:**

- a) Dawn Chorus talk:
Action: David to put an advertisement for the Dawn Chorus meeting in the next newsletter.
Action: Rob to prepare posters for the Dawn Chorus meeting, and put information about it on the web site.
- b) Sally said that there is to be a national Local Nature Reserve week between 14th and 25th July. This could tie in with an open day about Trooper’s Hill.
- c) Sally showed us a map of the River Avon Trail project, and reported that there was money to put up interpretation boards and host community events at sites along the river. The person in charge will contact FoTH for our input in due course.
- d) Bristol Museum and Art Gallery have organised a guided walk on Trooper’s Hill for 4th August. It is for Bristol residents who do not know the area well. Sally asked for volunteers to lead groups and talk about the Hill on the day. Rob and Susan volunteered their services and Sally will be contacting Carole to see if she can provide the history input.
- e) Rob asked whether people could think about where to position three extra benches on the Hill. Please bring your ideas to the next meeting.

13) **Date and Venue of Next Meetings:**

- a) Tuesday 27th April 2004 at 7.00pm, at Bristol East Allotments Pavilion, Nicholas Lane, St. George.
- b) Wednesday 26th May 2004 at 7.00pm, at St. Aidan’s Church Hall, St. George.

Meeting closed at 8.57pm.