

# MINUTES OF MEETING OF FRIENDS' of TROOPERS' HILL, 6/7/04

**Present:** Susan, Rob, David, Fran, Helen, Carole, and Val.

**Apologies:** Kit Elliott, Sally Oldfield, Gary Ratcliffe, Liz Read, Virginia and Norman Spalding.

**Minutes of last meeting:** Helen pointed out that she had in fact not volunteered Kit for the Health and Safety Training. Kit has an interest in taking a course for his own work purposes and will be arranging that independently. Apologies from David for that misunderstanding.

**Matters Arising:**

- The press release produced for the signing event seemed to work – it produced two media *nibbles* – Sally and Susan did a 5 minute interview with Radio Bristol and Sally did a GWR interview later that same week.
- Sally has contacted the dog wardens who say that dog fouling is against the law anywhere but that the wardens themselves have to witness the event to facilitate a successful prosecution. This matter produced a long discussion with all members contributing. Various viewpoints emerged varying from the “catch ‘em at it” school of thought to the “positive persuasion” brigade. On balance the latter held the day. Consequently Susan to E mail Sally to ask her to find out if there are free notices available from the dog wardens. David to talk to a near neighbour who organises dog shows to find out if she might conduct one for us on Malvern Road open space in September (or next summer if this is too late). Fran to see if she can give us any of the laminated notices that were produced for the Dundry Park Group.
- Rob thanked Helen for standing guard at the Greendown entrance on 3/7 and for putting up the notices announcing the rescheduled work party in July.
- The Bugs Walk was pronounced a success with some reservations expressed about the value of selling coffee and muffins. It was noted that kids seem to prefer anything that is made with lots of sugar and E numbers!
- Although Sally is on holiday it was assumed that the Balloon Fiesta event on 13/8 was on course although Martin the Grasshopper was yet to give us a definite confirmation. Costumes (on FOTH members) it was felt were not a good idea.
- The venue for the next meeting (5/8) has been confirmed as the Sikh Temple, 11, Summerhill Road.
- Helen is arranging to meet with Alex and do a butterfly transect soon. Carole was interested as well so may be meeting with Alex and Helen.!

**Work Party Issues:** Rob reported that there were 8 people in attendance at the last work party when bracken was cleared on the eastern steps. Gary was in discussion with the contractors to ensure that the Hill was correctly designated as “woodland”. Although somewhat obtuse the definition is important because it will mean that the contractors will then have to clear paths that are currently left to grow wild and which we have been spending time on – the one through Sally’s Glade, for example. The aim for the evening work party on 8/7 is to clear the path through Sally’s Glade (again!) Apologies were given in advance for this by Carole and Kit. [Post meeting note – the Work Party was rained off and has been rearranged for Thursday 22 July 7pm] The

dreaded Japanese Knotweed will be dealt with. The ensuing discussion, however, rather depressingly underscored the weed's phenomenal tenacity and speed of growth.

Rob reported that BCC are looking at bringing in a new system for risk assessment on working groups and this will involve us. Given his work to complete our risk assessment he was remarkably positive about this development.

#### **June Events:**

- The Signing had gone well, the pictures were good (see also mention in Matters Arising above)
- Bugs Walk had gone well with 20 plus children in attendance, there had been a positive feedback on and after the day. Things had not quite followed the expected pattern but as the Display had worked well and attracted a lot of attention and Rupert Higgins had not charged Bristol Council the event was given an unqualified "thumbs up".
- Rob's River Avon Trail Circular Walk had proved very successful. The latest issue of the Trail Bulletin includes a substantial article on Troopers Hill written by Rob. This and the fact that Rob had earned £50 for the group as a result of leading the Walk was much appreciated by the meeting. The £50 will be forthcoming when we raise an invoice and present it to the Avon Trail group. We are waiting for an order number from them at the moment. Thanks to Val for coming up with the format of the invoice.

**Joan Day's Talk:** Carole reported on the arrangements for this. The St. George Community Centre had been booked for the event – 7-9pm on Thurs. 29/7. There was a discussion on the catering arrangements concluding with the decision that tea would be served at the beginning! Helen, Susan and Carol will arrive early to set up the chairs. Rob is to produce and distribute the posters. The title of the talk is to be **The Industrial History of Troopers Hill and Crew's Hole.** The fee has been agreed as £30 but does not include expenses, it was thought these would not be required.

#### **Issues for Gary:**

- The cost of the repair of the vandalised, hilltop seat had been estimated at £262. Gary is looking to fund this from the Council budget.
- A person who would like to remain anonymous has found the missing plaque from the back of the seat and it has been returned to the commemorated lady's daughter by Susan. The anonymous well wisher has pledged a reward of £25 for information about the act of vandalism that results in a successful prosecution. Susan to talk to the community policeman about these vandals.
- The burnt out motor cycle under the Sycamore tree just off the Malvern Road open space has still not been moved but Gary knows about it.

**First Aid Training:** Susan is still looking for more volunteers to make the training financially viable. There was the offer of 4 people from the Dundry Park Group but this was not yet certain as to date Bernard has not agreed their share of the cost.

**Contact with Other Groups:** Fran had stepped into Rob and Susan's shoes in this regard whilst they were on holiday. Very understandably she did not, however, go to the Partnership Meeting as it was scheduled for the night of the England/Portugal Quarter final! She went to the Parks Forum on our behalf. It was poorly attended. Fran gave an overview of the meeting which seemed mainly to have covered, in great detail, the contracts side of park maintenance. Richard Fletcher, the Community Development Officer is to organise an event to bring the various disparate Parks

group together – we await further news. Fran handed out copies of the Forum newsletter Park People. This led to a renewed debate on the dog poo issue with the result that Carol is to hunt down the contact from the newsletter for the Scoop the Poop Campaign leaflets currently underway in Bedminster Parks. The next Parks Forum Meeting is on 25/9 at 9.30 am at Windmill Hill City Farm Training Room. Rob and Susan said they would go. They have already had to send their apologies for the next St. George Partnership Meeting.

**Fundraising:** There is £2244.54 in the bank plus some petty cash and the £50 due for Rob's good offices. There was a brief discussion about running expenses. Susan reported that the B&Q bid was unsuccessful. There had been 3000 bids for 20 grants! Rob said that we ought to apply for a grant for wheelchair access via the Malvern Road entrance plus the cost of the new benches which were not covered by the existing grant. There was general agreement.

**History Project:** There was no progress to report on Kit's video. Rob and Susan have found some large stones at Dundry Park which have given them the idea that we could use the History grant to begin the construction of a stone seat circle on top of the Hill. The stones could be carved as a later part of the project. Carole suggested a time capsule under the first seat. A discussion ensued but the general feeling was very positive because it was clearly something that could be done in stages and was about as vandal proof as was possible. Some reservations were expressed on the issues of cost and the correct siting of the stones just behind the skyline. Rob to research indicative costs of both stones and transport onto the Hill.

**Balloon Fiesta Event:** Likely timing is 4 – 7 pm depending on the weather. Tasks to be dealt with include: layout of the display, gazebo erection, refreshments, greeting and answering questions. David, and Val to help. Carole may be able to come along later.

**FOTH Website:** no progress to report.

**Future Meetings:** Thursday 5/8 at the Sikh Temple, 11, Summerhill Road.  
Tuesday 21/9 7pm to be held at 77, Fir Tree Lane.

**Timing of Next Newsletter:** Susan wondered if the newsletter could be brought forward to publicise the talk by Joan Day. David explained various family problems. Rob said that it would be better therefore to produce a History Group update and circulate this to publicise the Talk. The newsletter would then be published as normal for early August. Everyone agreed.

**AOB:** There being no AOB the meeting closed at 9.20pm.