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The Friends of Troopers Hill

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Autumn 2014



Well, it's been a busy summer on Troopers Hill. The Music on the Hill, Bugs and Beasties hunt and the Moth Night were all successful, despite threatening rain in some cases. You can see more about these events inside, but on top of that we

have helped out at the Eastwood Farm Dog Show, the [Kingsmeadow](#) Sports Jam and the St Aidan's Beavers', Cubs' and Scouts' visits to the Hill. The latter fixed new bird and bug boxes in the woods, while the Cubs checked out our Tree Trail



and the Beavers produced a bunch of posters encouraging owners to be responsible for their dogs' poo.

Coming events for this year include a History Walk around the Hill and local area

with Rob on Sunday 21st September. These are always popular, but places are limited, so book your place now—details in the "Contacts" panel. Following that we have our first "Falcons on the Field" event on Sunday 5th October, from 2pm. [West-country Falconry](#) will be bringing along a selection of Raptors to show and fly on the field. See the poster inside. Both these events are, as ever, totally free. We hope to see you at them.

We also ran a couple of evening work parties during the summer. An hour of work, followed by a rather pleasant session relaxing with a glass of wine and a chat afterwards. It is very difficult to arrange a convenient time for everybody, so if you have a favourite day and time of evening that you would like us to schedule next year, get in touch and let us know.



We are delighted to have a number of these lovely cards available for purchase. The cards are 6" x4" and feature an original painting of Troopers Hill by [Anthony Rudman](#), who teaches at the Wellspring Centre. The original painting was commissioned by Susan, but the artist also generously had a number of the cards printed to raise funds for FoTH.

The cards cost £1.50 each and would make lovely gifts or could be used as a Christmas (or for that matter any occasion) card.

If you would like one, please visit our stand at one of our events, such as "Falcons on the Field", or contact Susan directly.

Details in the "Contacts" panel.



Give your views about your nearest pharmacy

Bristol is asking for views on your nearest pharmacy – the section in your chemist or health centre where prescriptions are prepared. This is for the 2015 Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA), a document that Bristol has a duty to produce every three years. The PNA reports on where pharmacy services are in Bristol, when they open, how easy they are to reach, and where we might need more of them. Pharmacies must provide other essential services too, such as safe disposal of unused medicines, advice on other health and social care services, and they must also help us with self-care or to lead healthy lifestyles.

Working with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Bristol is keen to know what you think of the draft report before it gets published. So, what do you think of your nearest pharmacy? You can complete the consultation which is open until 14 November 2014.

The draft PNA has reached some conclusions about possible improvements. Read the draft (or the summary) and take part at: www.bristol.gov.uk/pna. Doing so online saves the Council money, but if you are not an internet user the consultation and short questionnaire is available at your local library, your GP or Health Centre.

Music on the Hill, Saturday 21st July



A beautiful, summer evening and the Ambling Band entertained us as only they could. Possibly our best ever Music on the Hill!

Moth Night, Friday 18th July



A perfect evening with the Bristol and District Moth Group finding out more about these often colourful creatures. We met at 9.30pm and an increasing range of moths visited the trap as darkness fell.

Bugs and Beasties



INSECTS FOUND TODAY	
WOOD Louse	Male HOPE WINGED GRASSHOPPER
FEMALE Long winged One head	MALE MEADOW GRASSHOPPER
MALE OAK CRICKET	COMMON BLUE BUTTERFLY
FEMALE BUSH CRICKET	GREEN VEIN SEA
24 SPOT LADYBIRD	SPIDER
MASONRY BEE	
FROG HOPPER	MEADOW BROWN BUTTERFLY
GRASS b3g	MOTTLED GRASSHOPPER
FIELD GRASSHOPPER	MOTH CATERPILLAR
HONEY BEE	HARVESTIAN
Seven spotted Ladybird	GRASS MOTH
BISHOP'S MITRE BUG	GREEN BOTTLE FLY
COMMON SPARROW	AGRIOTIS ZOECANIS
BANDED SNAIL	SQUARE SPOT PUPAIC BATH ?
MEADOW ANT	GARDEN PEBBLES MOTH
STRECKLED BUSH CRICKET	



The weather threatened and we watched the rain skirting along the far side of the valley, but it kept clear of Troopers Hill! Unfortunately it meant the balloons weren't flying, but many people enjoyed their picnics all the same.

Farewell to Jules

Many of you who walk the Hill may not know Jules by name but you will almost certainly have encountered a white boiler-suited figure working hard with a strimmer or blower or in tee-shirt and trousers leaping out of a small truck emptying dog and litter bins on Mondays and Fridays. You may also have been given, when budgets were bigger, free dog poo bags from time to time.

Julian Thomas, our Community Park Keeper, has worked on Troopers Hill since Bristol City Council first applied for a Green Flag Award for the site. You may remember the first one was awarded in 2007. While the Friends group were an essential part of the Green Flag award Jules is the person who kept the paths clear and did all the



regular maintenance jobs, sometimes calling on other Bristol City Council resources or outside contractors as they were needed.

Jules not only maintains the 21 acres of Troopers Hill but also the Local Nature Reserves of Callington Rd (15 acres) and Eastwood Farm (65+ acres). During the last two years Nightingale Valley and St Anne's Woods were added to his workload. Quite a challenge for one man.

Never a clock watcher, Jules used personal time to come to Friends' meetings when needed. He worked with us so that the work we did on our work parties neatly and helpfully tied in with the work he had planned. He cleared away the huge piles of cuttings we left for him after our monthly work parties. Bear in mind that we are not the only Friends group that Jules works with.

So after all these years of working at about 150% of a normal person Jules has decided the time has come for a change and will be leaving Bristol City Council's employ towards the end of this month.

We will certainly miss Jules although many of us are hoping that we will continue to see Jules socially. You will see some tangible mementoes of Jules' presence for years to come. The wonderful bridge that looks so much like a part of the Hill's industrial heritage is a tribute to Jules' welding skills and an imaginative response to burrowing creatures' determined undermining of a path. Some of Jules' wonderful way with words stays with us in the Jules's Diary section of old issues of our newsletters.

Winter 2012 (<http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/news/winter12.pdf> was a classic) "PS. We've got a Mayor! Discuss...."

Those of you who have chatted to Jules for any length of time will know he is a Shakespeare fan, so much so that he has done much to support the Tobacco Factory Theatre and Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory. This particular quote from Midsummer Night's Dream seems to fit Jules although I wouldn't describe him as a fairy.

"Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander everywhere,
Swifter than the moon's sphere:
And I serve...."

Farewell Jules, hope to see you soon. Coffee's on.

Susan



Falcons on The Field

Westcountry Falconry

Hawks Kestrels Owls & Kites

Troopers Hill Field, Summerhill Terrace, BS5 8HX
Sunday 5th October, from 2pm

Learn about the importance of Raptors in the food chain



Flying displays at
2.30 and 3.30



See them Close up



See them Flying



PRIZE COMPETITION!

Bring your camera with you— a prize for the best photo of one of the birds



Weather issues? Check our information line: 0753 161 5983

Buses 44, 45 or 37 to Marling Road stop, near Air Balloon Pub

Dates for your Diary

Work Parties: Saturdays 4th October, 1st November, 6th December. 10am—midday. Meet at corner of [Troopers Hill Road and Greendown](#). *Help us look after Troopers Hill. Gentle exercise and a bit of a laugh over some coffee afterwards.*

Meetings. Thursdays 11th September, 6th November. 7.15pm, [Summerhill Methodist Church](#), 5 Air Balloon Road. *Come along and share your views on our Local Nature Reserve.*

Slide Show of the year: Thursday 4th December. 7.15pm. Summerhill Methodist Church, 5 Air Balloon Rd. *Come along to see and hear all about the events of the last year, followed by our AGM. All welcome.*

Walks: (booking essential—see Contacts panel)
Sunday 21st September: **Troopers Hill History Walk.** 10.30am-noon. Join local historian Rob Acton-Campbell to learn more of the history of the Hill and the surrounding area.

Falcons on the Field. Sunday 5th October 2-4.30pm. *See Falcons and other birds of prey flying and learn, from Westcountry Falconry, all about the natural food chain and the importance of falcons and other raptors.*

Fungi Foray. Due to the recent, sad and very unexpected death of our fungi expert, Justin Smith, we have regrettably had to cancel this year's foray. Friends have decided to make a payment to the fund set up in Justin's name instead.

St George Strollers: Fri 3rd Oct: **Chew Valley.** *Meet outside Aldi, Church Rd, 9.30am. for return coach to Chew Valley.* Wed 15th Oct: **Hambrook to Frenchay.** Mon 27th Oct: **Netham Park Loop.** Tue 18th Nov: **St Anne's Park and Woods.** Thurs 4th Dec: **Cossham Hospital and Hillfields.** Fri 19th Dec: **Christmas Walk and meeting.** For more details, contact Clare—see Contacts panel—or check our website: www.troopers-hill.org.uk.strollers

ABC of Troopers Hill

U is for Underneath. Troopers Hill is a habitat of heath and grassland arising from acid soil. Underlying the soil, and forming rocky outcrops in places, are layers of Pennant sandstone. Sandstone is a sedimentary rock, deposited as silt and detritus from tropical swamps that existed some 300 million years ago. The Hill was extensively quarried for the sandstone, which is a valuable building material. The site has also been mined for the fireclay and seams of coal that penetrated the sandstone measures. Friends of Troopers Hill have heard stories of mines under the Hill extending into Speedwell, and that one could walk underground as far as Kingswood. The square chimney at the junction of Troopers Hill Road and Crew's Hole Road belonged to the former engine house for one of the collieries, which was active during the early 1800s. In 2010 Troopers Hill was designated as a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site. You can find out more about the formation of the Hill from our Audio trail.

Bryn Friallen

Shepherds Way

As it is September, and two years this month since the first episode of 'Shepherds Way' was broadcast on BCfm, I think it relevant that I should follow on from my last article.

We went live on 26th September 2012. The first show I was nervous, of course, but tried to keep calm, collected, and relaxed. Two years on and every show is still about trying to keep calm, collected, and relaxed.

I had a call from the station manager last week, he said he wanted to chat about the show. I felt almost nauseous, but listened to what he had to say. Apart from talking about it and singing its praises, he said "would you like to broadcast for two hours a week instead of one"? This I wasn't expecting, and you could've knocked me down with a feather. It comes at a nice time as it's almost a celebration in itself, and falls a few days before the program's anniversary.

I have a fantastic team, who give up their time each week to go out and see what's happening with our wildlife and nature, then sit in a studio and talk about it on air. In the two years I've been producing and presenting the program for BCfm I have noticed that not only is Bristol a fantastic place for nature and wildlife, but it's people are very passionate about it. I see this week in, week out, when the volunteers of Bristol's wild sites, the "friends of" groups, come and talk about their involvement, the wild areas, the precious bits of land, sites and areas that are sometimes well hidden within the city.

The wild animals of Bristol, the plants and trees, have many, many volunteers and helpers to thank for maintaining, protecting, and preserving these special areas for generations to come. They fight to keep these areas from the hands of the developers who see them purely as building sites and money making projects, not for the richness and diversity of the nature and wildlife that have 'their' homes in these areas.

Walk into these areas and take a moment to sit or stand, quiet and still. Observe the fantastic array of life that's all around you. Absolutely wonderful.

Steve Shepherd

Contacts:

For the latest news and updates, phone our

Information line: 0753 161 5983

If you'd like to talk to us, please contact:

Susan Acton-Campbell (Chair), Tel. **0117 947 5037**

You can also write to us at:

3, Corkers Hill, St. George, Bristol, BS5 8DT

friends@troopers-hill.org.uk

www.facebook.com/TroopersHill

Or go to the online forum at:

www.troopers-hill.org.uk/news&views

To book a place on an event,

Phone Judith: 0117 955 9819 Or email:

events2014@troopers-hill.org.uk

Walking for Health (St George Strollers):

Contact: Clare Willott: 0117 941 4514

strollers@troopers-hill.org.uk

BCFM 93.2FM and Online at <http://bcfmradio.com/>

To report incidents on Troopers Hill, phone Bristol

Parks: 0117 922 3719

Report criminal activity to the police on 999

or Police local beat manager, Pete Crawford. He can be contacted via the Police non-urgent phone number 101

www.troopers-hill.org.uk