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The Friends of Troopers Hill




Winter 2009/10



The good news, for all of us that have missed him, is that we have recently seen Jules our 'Parkie'. Although he is still off work as a result of his series of heart attacks, he is hopeful that he will be able to return to some of his duties before too long. We look forward to seeing him on the Hill once again. Meanwhile, a

huge vote of thanks to Keith who asked to fill in for Jules in his absence. He has been keeping the Hill in good shape and Jules can take comfort that upon his return he will not be playing catch-up. We hope that maybe Keith will be able to work with Jules in the future and we look forward to seeing more of him as well.

Our annual round-up of the year and slide show was well attended on Sunday December 6th. Rob again gave a very enjoyable and detailed review of the year, including a video of the Bugs and Beasties event and a short version of Helen's visit to the Fourth Plinth. It was again combined with our AGM which returned Susan Acton-Campbell as our chair once more.  Congratulations, Susan!

The AGM was the last of our meetings to be held in the Wesley Memorial Church Hall — for the moment at any rate. At a recent meeting a request was made that we should find a venue nearer to the Hill itself. So future meetings will be taking place at Summerhill Methodist Church on Summerhill Road. We would like to express our very great thanks to Graham and Linda who run the Wesley Memorial Church Hall. They have been kindness itself and have put themselves out on many an occasion to make our meetings more enjoyable — and thanks for the lovely cakes Linda!

Stuck for something to keep the kids busy over the Christmas Holidays? Then register them for a new website run by Bristol City Council at <http://www.goplacesdothings.org.uk/>. The site is specifically designed for 13–19 year olds and is full of information and things to get them involved, in and around Bristol. "The site helps to promote the positive things that young people can get involved in and do in Bristol" it says and "young people can find out about sports, arts, volunteering, music events, festivals, youth clubs, cultural and leisure events and places that can offer support."

So, we come to the end of another decade. One which saw the birth and growth of the Friends of Troopers Hill. It has been an eventful decade — some good, some bad. We are looking forward to entering the next one (the "teenies?") and so would like, once more, to wish you all a Happy New Year and a very,

 **Merry Christmas** 

2010 Photo Competition

Many of you will remember the photo competition we ran in 2007. It proved popular so we have decided to run another one in 2010.

This time, the competition will run from the 1st January until 31st October 2010. Your challenge is to take a photograph at any event taking place on Troopers Hill — not just ours. The subject could be a work party, the Good Friday Service, one of our events (more news of those next issue) or



2007, Over 16 winner

any other organised event as long as it takes place on Troopers Hill or Troopers Hill Field. So, there is loads of scope.



2007, 12 to 16 winner



2007, Under 12 winner

Independent judges will decide on the winning entries in

two categories — under 16 and over 16, so please make sure you tell us what age you were when you took your photograph. Prizes (apart from the glory) will be a gift voucher of your choice to the value of £20 and the winners will be announced at our AGM in December 2010. There are a few simple rules which you can find on page 4 of this Newsletter. Entries can be in any format—digital or otherwise.

Please enter, have a bit of fun and bring out the budding David Bailey in yourself!

Bristol Parks

Troopers Hill has been owned by Bristol City Council since September 1956, when it was purchased for £600 for use as open space. Friends of Troopers Hill (FoTH) work very closely with Bristol Parks who manage the Hill along with all the other Council owned green space in Bristol. In the early days it was very difficult for us to work out who did what in Bristol Parks and we were very lucky to have Sally Oldfield as a single point of contact. Over the years we came to know more people in Parks, and (through the Parks Forum) more about how Bristol Parks are organised and how it fits in with the rest of the Council.

2009 has seen many changes within Bristol Parks, but we have been lucky that the team who manage Troopers Hill on a day to day basis has remained unchanged. Julian is still our 'Parkie' (we are hoping that he will be back on the hill soon) and the team is still led by Dave. Another of the team, Keith, is currently filling in for Julian. This time last year they were part of BCS, which was a separate organisation but still owned by Bristol City Council. Now all the team work directly for Bristol Parks. Dave now reports to Jamie our 'Area Parks Manager' (APM) and he is helped by Gary our 'Community Parks Officer' (CPO). Jamie and Gary cover all of East Bristol; about a quarter of the city. APMs and CPOs replaced 'Community Park Managers' (CPMs) - Claire, our last CPM, is now on maternity leave having recently given birth to a baby boy. Our very best wishes to Claire and her family.

Both Jamie and Gary have been to at least one of our meetings and both have walked the hill with Susan and me. We have also had a separate meeting to discuss the Management Plan. On the last walk we were also joined by one of Bristol Parks' ecologists, Jan, who helps by giving advice on the hill's management. It is clear that everyone we meet in Bristol Parks wants to see Troopers Hill being well looked after and will give us support where they can.

From the beginning one of the strongest supporters of FoTH was Peter Wilkinson, who was Head of Bristol Parks. Peter came to the hill to sign our first Management Plan in June 2004 and was very keen to see us go for the Green Flag Award. We were therefore particularly sorry to learn last month that Peter has left his post. At the moment he has not been replaced.

Some of the responsibility for parks maintenance will be 'devolved' to Neighbourhood Partnerships in 2010 and it is possible that this will bring further changes to how parks are managed within Bristol City Council, so we shall see how that develops. Through the Parks Forum I will be involved in dis-

cussions about any future changes.

If you want to know more about what is happening on parks and green spaces in Bristol, visit the Parks Forum website:

www.bristolparksforum.org.uk/ Through the website you can also sign up for their regular email updates.

Rob Acton-Campbell

Green Christmas Ideas

Give Environmentally Friendly Gifts

For many, Christmas is a time to pull out all the stops when it comes to gift-giving. Malls and shopping centers fill to bursting with consumers looking to empty their wallets and carry home piles of gadgets, clothes and toys. With growing awareness of the problem of global warming and the risks involved with burning large amounts of fossil fuels to manufacture, package and transport goods, many people are looking for ways to "green" their lifestyle. Here are some ideas to help you and your family have a green Christmas this year. A green Christmas may take a bit more advance planning than heading to your local mall on Christmas Eve, but going green can be a powerful statement of your beliefs by using your spending pound to send a powerful message.

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Instead of buying something brand-new, try making gifts and wrapping by using recycled or salvaged materials. Gift bags can be made by using scrap pieces of colourful cotton cloth. Instead of buying a brand new book or CD, see if you can find one in good condition at a second-hand bookstore. For those looking for gifts for kids, you can make great sock puppets out of the solitary socks lurking in the bottom of your drawer. Get creative! Going green means you're saving useful materials from the landfill and avoiding the environmental impact of buying something brand new.

Give Handmade Gifts. Ask yourself what kind of crafty skills you have, and use those skills to make gifts for friends and family. Most people are delighted to receive a handcrafted gift because of the investment of time, love and creative energy it represents. If you excel in the kitchen, try making preserves, cakes, pies or bread. If you like to work with wood, use your skills to craft CD racks or spice shelves. If you [knit](#), try stuffing a pair of hand knit socks into a stocking this year. If you're not comfortable making gifts, or simply lack the time, you can give something green by buying products made locally. Buying gifts made by local artisans and craftspeople supports the artists in your midst and boosts your local economy, as well as avoiding the carbon emissions caused by shipping.

Share an Experience. What do you give those people who have everything? Instead of buying them another gadget that they might already have and probably don't really need, give them an experience. An afternoon of horseback riding, a massage or pedicure, a session in a pottery studio or tickets to a concert or play are all environmentally friendly gift ideas. Many gifts given each Christmas end up buried in the back of the cupboard by January, and eventually make their way to the landfill, but an experience will last forever in someone's memory.

Oct 25, 2007 Michelle Carchrae

Courtesy <http://greenliving.suite101.com>

Play Area Opening

Great fun was had by a lot of children at the official opening of the Troopers Hill Field new play area on Saturday 5th December. Friends of Troopers Hill volunteers, including Scouts and leaders from 159th St Aidan's Scouts, started preparing at 10 that morning. A gazebo was put up, a 10 metre red ribbon was tied around the new log climbing structure and 125 hazel trees, donated by Bristol Council, were laid out around the new maze ready to start planting at 11am.

Just before 11am one tree was planted as a demonstration and then at 11am Kyle, one of our Scouts let out a massive whoop to start us all off planting trees as part of the BBC's record attempt, Tree O'Clock. The challenge was to

plant the most trees in the space of 1 hour. Our tree planting was completed in 15 minutes! Two swans made a wonderful sound flying overhead as we did so.



At midday John Williams (who managed the consultations, design and installation of the play area for Bristol Parks) gave a short speech of welcome. I then added a few words saying how much Friends of Troopers Hill had appreciated the management of the project. Excellent consultation had been done, asking people, especially children, what was wanted and much effort was put into publicising Lucy Empson's wonderful designs. Feedback was then used to modify those designs. Lucy and John have achieved a great deal with the £10,000 that came from the government Play Pathfinder scheme. Our Scouts, a Guide called Lois and the grandson of one of our members then pulled the red ribbon as Troopers Hill Field Play Area was declared officially open.



More information and photos on our website at <http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/play09.htm>.

Susan Acton-Campbell

The Friends of Troopers Hill Dog Show, 2009

Our second dog show, again run by Friends of Troopers Hill and Bristol Parks with support from HEART pet rescue. The event was free of charge due to the continuing support of Beeses Bar & Tea Gardens.

The morning rain stopped just before we were due to start and we then had a dry afternoon, apart from one heavy shower which led to the 'how many people can you get in a gazebo challenge'.



Our local dog warden and Police Community Support Officers came along, as did the PDSA and Cats' Protection League. Lucas Vets provided the

judges and some of the prizes.

As well as the 10 classes in the main ring, our fun scurry was also running all



Go on, you know you want to....

afternoon. New for this year we had a water challenge, where the winning dog retrieved 6 toys from the paddling pool and lots of others had fun splashing around.



Santa's come early

A big thank you to Julie, Kit and Susan for all the work they put in organising the event and to everyone who came along to help, despite the damp morning.

Rob

ABC of Troopers Hill

C is for the Chimneys. One chimney occupies a prominent landmark position on top of the Hill. The chimney was built to provide greater air flow and thus higher temperatures in a copper smelting furnace at the foot of the Hill, probably in the late 1700s, and later on, for a chemical works owned by Stone and Tinson. The south facing slope shows the course of the duct that would have carried fumes up and away from the works. It continued in use until about the time of the First World War. The chimney stack at the corner of Crews Hole Road and Troopers Hill Road was part of the engine house of the former Troopers Hill colliery, also known as Crews Hole Pit, where coal was mined during the early 1800s.

D is for Dogs. Dogs and their owners are welcome to Troopers Hill. A well behaved dog is a joy to behold, and it is lovely to see dogs running and playing on their morning and evening walks. A dog's happiness depends on its being properly trained and controlled. However friendly, a dog that ignores its owner's call, bounding away and jumping up can scare, overwhelm or injure a frail person or child. It is essential that all owners clear up after their dogs (and most do), because dog mess, as well as being unpleasant, is a proven health hazard. Friends of Troopers Hill held a most successful dog show on the Field in October last year and again this year. They have been fun for everybody. To report problems involving dogs on Troopers Hill, the council Dog Warden's number is 0117 922 2500, email: dog.warden@bristol.gov.uk

Bryn Frialen

Rules for the Photo Competition

- 1) We will endeavour to return slides (so make sure we have your details), but not prints.
- 2) All photos will be scanned and then judged in a digital format.
- 3) If you enter an image, you will retain the copyright to that image, but you will automatically give us the rights to use that image as we see fit in the future in our, or allied groups, publicity.
- 4) Independent judges will be used.
- 5) A maximum of 3 entries per person.
- 6) A statement of ownership of the images you submit will be required.
- 7) All entries need to be received by 31st October 2010.
- 8) No person deemed as a "professional" photographer shall be eligible to enter.
- 9) The Judges decisions are final.

Friends of Troopers Hill: Dates for your Diary

Saturday 9th January (second Saturday in January): **Work Party.** 10 am—midday. Meet at corner of Troopers Hill Road and Greendown. *Come along and help us look after the nature on Troopers Hill.*

Meetings in 2010: are currently scheduled for Tuesday 12th January, Thursday 4th March, Tuesday 25th May, Tuesday 13th July, Tuesday 28th September and Tuesday 9th November. 7.15—9 pm. Summerhill Methodist Church, Summerhill Road. *Come along and share your views with us.*

Saturday 6th February: **Work Party.** As 9th January.

Saturday 6th March: **Work Party.** As 9th January

Friday 2nd April: **Good Friday Service on the Hill.** Organised by local churches.

Saturday 3rd April: **Work Party.** As 9th January.

Saturday 10th April: **Dawn Chorus.** 6.30am. A guided walk to listen to bird song and spot birds led by expert Ed Drewitt. Booking Essential.

Sunday 25th April: **Avon Valley Walk.** 10am—4pm. A 5 mile walk starting and ending at Troopers Hill visiting neighbouring wildlife sites and nature reserves. Bring 25p for your ferry crossing from Beeses Riverside Bar and Tea Gardens. Bring a picnic to eat by the river at Eastwood Farm or let us know if you want to buy lunch at Beeses so we can book a table. There is a special opportunity to visit the Bath House, a historic building close to Troopers Hill, bookings can be made to only visit this venue and not join in the walk but numbers are strictly limited - first come, first served. The walk is free but places must be booked.

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**

Email:
friends@troopers-hill.org.uk

Or go to the online forum at:
[http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/
forum.html](http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/forum.html)

To book a place on an event,
Phone Judith: 0117 955 9819 Or
email:

events2010@troopers-hill.org.uk

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, Peter Crawford, can be
contacted on 07919628304

