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The Friends of Troopers Hill



Autumn 2008

THE ST GEORGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Neighbourhood Partnerships (NPs) are a government led initiative and Bristol Council has been a strong supporter of the scheme. The NPs exist so that people can have more of a say in the important issues for their area: St George NP covers the council wards of St George East and St George West. On behalf of Friends of Troopers Hill, Susan has been attending St George Neighbourhood Partnership meetings since the group started last November.

The Partnership holds 3 public meetings a year, when people can raise local issues that they are concerned about. Those issues are then followed up and progress reported at the next meeting. Items raised so far have ranged from the lack of youth provision and community facilities in Speedwell, to replacing street trees in Kensington Rd. Good progress has been made and the St George group has already had direct influence on services provided by council and public sector bodies, such as the police.

Friends of Troopers Hill have been very interested in having a voice in the Partnership because the NP will be consulted next year about the Bristol Parks and Green Space Strategy, as it affects St George.

The next public meeting will be on Wednesday 12th November at 7pm so please do come along to hear what has been achieved and raise the priorities that concern you. If you would like to see what happens in detail behind the scenes between the public meetings, you can come to one of the steering group meetings. Contact Susan if you would like more information.

If you'd like to talk to us about any issues raised in this newsletter, please contact:

Susan Acton-Campbell (Chair), Tel. **0117 947 5037** .
Sally Oldfield (Bristol Council Nature in the City) ,
Tel. **0117 922 4429**

You can also write to us at: **3, Corkers Hill, St. George, Bristol, BS5 8DT**

Email:

chair@troopers-hill.org.uk or
Sally.oldfield@bristol.gov.uk

Or go to the online forum at:

<http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk/forum.html>



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It was with great regret that we had to cancel the "Bugs and Beasties" event in August. The weather was simply too bad. Apart from the risk of children slipping on wet grass, the bugs could also have been harmed by wet catch nets. As it is a very popular event, we may well try again next year. Hopefully the Balloon Fiesta weekend weather will be better in 2009.

We're delighted to announce that Troopers Hill has been awarded a Green Flag again. Along with the Hill, the Downs (also for the second time), Blaise Castle Estate and Queen Square were successful in receiving this prestigious award. It underlines the continuing improvements the Council is achieving in the quality of Bristol's open spaces.

As you know, deer are sometimes seen on the Hill. Whilst it is not a huge problem, we would like to remind Friends about the danger from Wood Ticks (which are carried by deer), especially in areas of long grass and bracken. Wood Ticks are associated with Lyme's Disease, which is a rare, but very unpleasant and occasionally fatal illness. It is a good idea for dog owners to check their pets as well, as they too can become hosts to these pests.



Our Tai Chi classes on the Hill have been very successful. Attendances were between 24 and 30 people each day, helped by largely favourable weather—hard to believe this year! As a result, the Bristol School of Tai Chi are offering a taster session for £6 on Thursday 2nd October at 7 pm in the Wesley Memorial Church Hall, followed by a 10 session weekly course. Come along or contact them on 0117-9493955 for further details.

One day in June....



Oliver and Daniel are interviewed by Radio Bristol



Martin starts the Story of "Trooping the Hill"



The tale of "Tony Oscar", the Giant Dragonfly begins....



....and the Beavers help him "take flight"



The Strawberry Feast



The Scouts' "Crashed Air Balloon"



Katy Sobey wows the crowd



South Gloucestershire Youth Jazz Orchestra

Earlier this year Ivan Packer, a student from Bristol University, carried out a small mammal survey on the heathland and in the woods on Troopers Hill. One of the purposes of this survey was to assist management of the environment now and in the future. The survey itself is too long to repeat here, but the conclusions were quite clear; *".....It is therefore recommended that the site is managed sympathetically in order to maximise the diversity of plant and insect species as well as small mammal species. This will in turn increase the diversity in terms of the other species to be found and improve the overall ecology of the site."*



Wood Mouse

Exactly what we've been trying to do all this time!

Letters to the Editor

We love to hear from you, whatever the reason. Recently we received this email which we'd like to share with you.....

My parents, Ray & Joan Hodges, came from the Speedwell area of Bristol, both growing up in the early 1920s. As they were neighbours, so their friendship grew and eventually they married in Kingswood in 1941.

My Dad worked at St Anne's Board Mills until they closed in the 1980s. As a family we lived in Allison Road in Brislington and as we grew up in the area, Troopers Hill was often mentioned - especially when Dad was still working.

It is our belief that Mum and Dad used to do their courting at Troopers Hill: we took them both on a trip up the river once and Dad pointed out the area to us. From that day he always said he wanted his ashes scattered there.

Sadly Dad passed away suddenly in March this year. So in April my sisters and I carried out Dad's wishes and scattered his ashes. What a lovely spot: such fantastic views over our lovely city.

Today would have been Dad's 87th Birthday so I went with one of my daughters to the place where we said cheerio to him. While I was there, I met Susan and some Friends who were busy having a tidy up! I told them the reason why we were there and she asked me to send this to you.

Hope it makes interesting reading to you. We, as a family, shall continue to visit Troopers Hill. Long may you continue your good work.

Paula Clatworthy (Mrs)"

Cutting down broom!

A lot of the work we have done at Work Parties over the past five years has been to cut back bramble where it has been covering areas of broom. The wild broom, with its yellow spring flowers, is one of the features of Troopers Hill that you will not find in such profusion anywhere else in Bristol and we want to protect it.

We now have new broom plants growing where there would otherwise have been just bramble and in the long term we hope broom will grow in some of the areas that were cleared of scrub last winter.

However... Troopers Hill LNR is only 21 acres and our aim, through the Management Plan agreed with Bristol Parks, is to keep a balance between the different types of habitat. The acid grassland and the heathland is the most important habitat since it is these areas that support the rare invertebrates that are found on the hill. It is the reason that it was declared a Local Nature Reserve in 1995. In some areas broom (and gorse) have been spreading into the heathland and grassland and so this also now needs controlling.

So, if you join us on our Work Parties this winter you might well find yourself being asked to cut down broom in some areas, while cutting bramble back to protect broom in others.

Rob Acton-Campbell

Friends of Troopers Hill Fun Dog Show



Sunday 12th October - Troopers Hill Field
Judging starts 2pm - All classes are FREE

Come along with your dog and HAVE FUN!!!

Classes.....

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| 1 Cutest Puppy | 6 Best Rescued Dog or Bitch |
| 2 Best Veteran (Dogs 8 years & over) | 7 Cuddliest Dog/Bitch |
| 3 Most Handsome Dog | 8 Best Child Handler (7 & under) |
| 4 Prettiest Bitch | 9 Best Child Handler (8 - 16 years) |
| 5 Waggiest Tail | 10 Judges Favourite |

Our fun scurry for you and your dog will also be running all afternoon
Prizes & Rosettes given up to 3rd place

For further information call Julie on 0117 947 7353
or email friends@troopers-hill.org.uk

No on-site car parking

This event is run by Friends of Troopers Hill and Bristol Parks with support from HEART pet rescue.

Our thanks to Beeses' Bar and Tea Gardens for their kind donation that has allowed us to put on this event free of charge and to Lucas Vets for sponsoring the rosettes and judging.



Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve
Green Flag Award Winner 2007/8 & 2008/9
www.troopers-hill.org.uk

Jules's Diary

Hello Troopers!

I guess it must be the romantic in me...

There I am, typical Summer's Monday morn and I'm trudging around the Hill in heavy drizzle emptying bins and picking up litter. On the way back from the chimney the rain begins to persist down, just grab that last piece of paper wedged in the bench over looking the 'new' view and dash for the shelter of the truck. Fumble in pockets for keys and find said piece of paper. Rain now so heavy can't see out the windows, congratulate myself on timing and scan paper... covered in handwriting... two or, as it turned out, three different hands (one, presumably, the somewhat exasperated go-between).

Brings back memories of my callow youth, and also "The Story of the Bench" that was being told a year or so ago... One wonders how this story ended... Happily I hope...

Unrequited love, we've all been there! As John Cage once said "Sometimes the dream is enough".....

"Hi! There's a point to this so just that, okay? You alright? 😊"

"I'm cool, I'm cool. U?"

"Yeah I'm good_ well erm there's a reason to this but I'm scared to say so ur probably guna have to guess 😊"

"OK"

"Yeah yuhh guess then x"

"I have"

"Tell me then"

"Hope U'll tell me"

"I can't you know, just tell me what you think it is 😊"

(unclear)

"Yes you do know what wer'e talking about! Come on man! You know!"

"I don't, I don't!"

"No (L——) I won't say, I'm scared."

"*No! he so knows * giggly like a schoolchild**"

"You say it?"

"*(M——) likes you.*"

"I don't know do I?"

"I'm actually really sorry, I don't know why I said it, for one I feel really awkward and two I don't have a chance anyway so why did I even say it?" 😊"

"*It doesn't matter. I really like you. I love you but not in the same way.*"

"I know that's why I shouldn't have said anything and now I feel stupid!!"

"*I'm gonna go and sit on the bench, join me if you want*" 😊"

Like I said, romantic!.....

Cheers,

Jules

(Initials changed to protect the innocent) ;)

Dates for Your Diary

Wednesday 1st October: 7.15pm. Meeting . Wesley Memorial Church Hall, Bryant's Hill. *All are welcome. We need your thoughts.*

Saturday 4th October: Work Party. 10 am until midday. *Meet at corner of Troopers Hill Road and Greendown.*

Sunday 12th October: Family Fun Dog Show. 2pm—4.30pm. A fun event on Troopers Hill Field that we hope all local dogs and dog owners will want to attend. *For dogs of all shapes and sizes. Funded by donations from Beeses' Bar & Tea Garden.*

Saturday 1st November: Work Party. 10 am until midday. *Meet at corner of Troopers Hill Road and Greendown.*

Thursday 13th November: 7.15pm. Meeting . Wesley Memorial Church Hall, Bryant's Hill. *All are welcome.*

Saturday 6th December: Work Party. 10 am until midday. *Meet at corner of Troopers Hill Road and Greendown.*

Thursday 11th December: AGM and Social Evening. 7.15pm. *Come along and find out how we have been doing. Raise issues concerning you and see our annual slide show of the year's events.*

Nature in the City Events.

Contact Sally Oldfield for further details and to book places.

Sunday 5th October. Avon Valley Walk. 10.00am—4pm. *A guided walk through Conham, Dundridge Park, Troopers Hill, St Anne's Woods, Nightingale Valley & Eastwood Farm finishing at Beeses' Bar & Tea Rooms. Meet at Conham car-park. Bring a packed lunch. You may like to finish your walk with refreshments at Beeses' Tea Gardens.*

Thursday 16th October. Owl Prowl. 7pm—9pm. *Join Ian McGuire on an exciting night-time hunt for owls.*

Friday 31st October: 10.30 am. Troopers Hill. Through the seasons walk. *The fourth of four short and relaxed guided walks introducing the history and wildlife of the hill.*

Sunday 2nd November: 10.30am. Fungi Foray. *Join expert Justin Smith in a hunt for mushrooms, toadstools and other fungi on Troopers Hill. N.B. This event is already fully subscribed, but you can check for cancellations.*