



**Friends of  
Troopers Hill**

# newsletter August 2004

## **SIGNING SUCCESS**

On the evening of June 9<sup>th</sup> the suspicious characters you may have noticed on top of the Hill were in fact some Friends of Troopers Hill and Peter Wilkinson, the Head of Bristol Parks! They had gathered to witness the signing of the five year Action Plan on the very Hill that it is all about. Despite attempts by one of the Friends' dogs to eat the biscuits provided in the gazebo specially erected for the event, the signing passed off very successfully. Peter Wilkinson said, after he had put away his pen, that the Plan written by Rob (the Work Party Organiser for the Friends) was "one of the best examples of community action" he had ever read. The evening was brought to a close with a walk around the Hill and a closer look at the key issues on the Hill that the Plan hopes to tackle in coming years. The event was reported by Radio Bristol and GWR during that week when they interviewed Friends' Chair, Susan and Sally Oldfield, Local Nature Reserves Officer.

If you want to read the Plan you can either buy a copy at a small charge from Rob and Susan (see the back of this newsletter for their contact details). Or, you can have a look online at [www.troopers-hill.org.uk](http://www.troopers-hill.org.uk)

## **AMAZING FIND ON THE HILL**

The plaque from the bench that was destroyed by fire a few months ago has been found! It has been returned to the daughter of the lady, a Mrs Phyllis Gay, whose life the seat commemorated. Although still upset about her mother's bench she was pleased to have it back.

The bench has been so lonely with no one able to sit on it these last few months that it seems to have taken up writing! A notice claiming to be written by the bench has appeared upon it in recent days to the effect that it will cost £270 to repair and donations from well wishers should be sent to the Friends (see back page for contact details) who will speed through the repair.

## **BURNT OUT MOTORCYCLE**

The motorbike that was torched one evening a few weeks ago against a Sycamore tree just yards into Crews Hole Wood beyond the Playground will be removed shortly. The incident has substantially damaged the bark of the tree which may now die as a result.

## **LOCAL CHILDREN MEET RARE INSECTS**

A posse of youngsters equipped with nets and collection jars took to the Hill under the supervision of local wildlife expert Rupert Higgins on June 12<sup>th</sup> as part of the **Bugs and Butterflies Walk**. It was declared "cool" by many of those in attendance even before a rare yellow legged clearwing moth was spotted! The children quite enjoyed it too!! The event was planned by the Friends of Troopers Hill to showcase the many rare insects that live on the Hill and which are most easily spotted at this time of year.

## **CHIMNEY OLDER THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT!**

This was one of the interesting conclusions drawn by the Industrial historian **Mrs Joan Day** during her illustrated talk to History Group on July 29<sup>th</sup>. She suggested that in her opinion the chimney was originally built in the 1700s as a vent for the copper smelters that lined the riverbank at this time. If this conclusion is right it would make the chimney the oldest surviving industrial structure in the locality

The talk took place at the St. George Community Centre and

was well attended. Those who came were treated to a survey of the industrial development of Troopers Hill and Crews Hole from the late 1600s through to the 1980s.

## **MINI STONEHENGE FOR THE HILL?**

At the last meeting (6/7) further discussion took place about how to spend the grant that we might get to commemorate the history of the Hill. The most interesting and inspiring idea that was raised involved looking into the possibility of putting some large stones in a semi-circle on top of the Hill that would double as seats as well as a place where some inscription to the Hill's past could be located. It was particularly liked because the circle would be largely vandal proof and could be completed in stages as the money became available. A bit like Stonehenge itself really!!

## **FUTURE EVENTS**

There will be a **Family Fun Picnic on Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup>**. It will start at 4pm. This is the first day of the Bristol Balloon Fiesta and is timed so that everyone who comes will have a grandstand view of the mass ascent of balloons from Ashton Court. The view of this event from the hillside is excellent. We hope to have a very large, pet grasshopper who will be telling the younger children stories! Also there will be quizzes and simple competitions for the children to take part in. Light refreshments will be provided at a small charge.

The next working party on the Hill will be on **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August** between 10am and 12 noon.

After that the next one will be **Saturday September 4<sup>th</sup>** at the same time. On each of these occasions everyone who can spare the time is welcome. We meet by the gateway at the junction of Troopers Hill Road and Greendown.

By the time you read this we will have had our next meeting, but the one after that is planned for Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September. Everyone is welcome so come along to 77, Fir Tree Lane at 7pm and put your point of view.

## **PLEA FOR HELP!**

Could any of you who regularly receive this newsletter help with its distribution? Last month Susan spent 3<sup>1/2</sup> hours delivering copies. If you wouldn't mind just handing out copies to your neighbours please give Susan a ring and help to save her a lot of time and trouble. Thank you!

## **How to contact us**

If you want to contact us about issues raised in this newsletter or anything else please use the list above.

**Susan Acton-Campbell**  
chair@troopers-hill.org.uk  
Tel. 0117 947 5037 or write to 3,  
Corkers Hill, St. George, Bristol,  
BS5 8DT.

**Val Harris**  
[treasurer@troopers-hill.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@troopers-hill.org.uk)

**David Gladden**  
secretary@troopers-hill.org.uk  
newsletter issues

**Rob Acton-Campbell**  
works@troopers-hill.org.uk  
working party issues

**Membership Secretary:**  
**Virginia Spalding**  
membership@troopers-hill.org.uk

**Bristol Council Local Nature  
Reserves Officer:**  
**Sally Oldfield**  
sally\_oldfield@bristol-  
city.gov.uk  
Tel. 0117 922 4429

## **Getting involved**

The Friends of Troopers Hill does not charge membership fees and does not have a formal membership. Our meetings and events are open to everyone with an interest in Troopers Hill or its surroundings. If you wish to receive future editions of this newsletter and are not on our mailing list please let Susan or Virginia have your details. These details will only be used for sending you information about Friends of Troopers Hill and will not be passed to any third party.

If you have an email address, please help us to save money and paper by sending your email address to membership@troopers-hill.org.uk. All future news will then be sent to you by email.