



January 2017

The aim of Friends of Pittville is to promote greater community involvement in the enjoyment, protection, future restoration and renewal of Pittville Park and Estate

Welcome to the January newsletter for members of Friends of Pittville. As it is our first since the AGM in October, we include an update on officers and trustees.

This issue is our first in colour. Please tell us what you think – while it will obviously increase printing costs a little, this will not affect subscriptions. If colour proves popular and we make the change permanent, it would provide an opportunity to include members' photos taken in Pittville to reflect the changing seasons.

Please also note our Chairman's appeal for a treasurer!

Sunday lunch at East India Café

On 20 November twenty-two guests, including some new members, met at the East India Café for a very enjoyable lunch. John Simpson (Pittville History Works) had written a new entertainment, featuring amongst other characters, Pitt the Elderly and Pigeonella the pigeon, who first drew Pitt's attention to the fact that there might be money to be made from Cheltenham's mineral waters.



Lady Frances Stapleton (Judy Langhorn) curtsies to King George III (Douglas Ogle). Keeping a close eye on the script behind are Pitt the Elderly (John Simpson) and Pigeonella the water-divining pigeon (Judie Hodsdon).

At the end of the event, the restaurant owners

presented FOP with a cheque for £175 (10% from this lunch and from members who had dined there since the introduction of the Café scheme whereby, if Friends of Pittville members dine at the Café, 10% of their bill will be given to FOP).



Rina Saha and Litu Mohiuddin of the East India Café present a cheque (and a celebratory cake!) to FOP chairman Judie Hodsdon.

Friends of Pittville AGM

Our AGM took place on 18 October 2016 at Dunalley Primary School and was attended by nearly 60 members. To mark the 10th anniversary of Friends of Pittville, those attending celebrated with a glass of prosecco as Steven Blake proposed a toast to the group's achievements.

The guest speaker was Adrian Barlow, whose fascinating illustrated talk on the architecture of Victorian Pittville showed the eclectic nature of what we think of as 'Regency' style. Several houses have Gothic details alongside the classical Regency, some have attic windows that are clearly later additions. The decorative external pelmets on many houses were covers for blinds. Some basement frontages were adapted so that servants could have more light in which to work. And how many of us realised that bollards were originally upended cannon, with the cannon ball fixed on top?



Clarence Parade shows the change in style from Regency to Victorian Gothic.



Frontages were adapted to allow more light into basements.

Update on officers and trustees

At our first trustees' meeting after the AGM on 18 October 2016, held on 1 November, Judie Hodsdon and Fiona Clarke were chosen by the trustees as Hon Chairman and Hon Secretary respectively. This is the new procedure, agreed by the members present at a Special General Meeting in September 2015, when a new constitution was approved.

Judie and Fiona are now into the second year of their three-year term. Trustees may stand for another three years, should they wish, but must stand down after that for at least one year. And, of course, they can resign at any time.

The other trustees, also beginning their second year, are Christopher Archibald, Gloria Jones, Sandy Marshall, David Richards, and Hilary Simpson. Eileen Lockwood was elected at this year's AGM and begins her first year as a trustee.

The constitution allows the trustees to appoint additional trustees, up to a maximum of twelve. Henry Williams offered to become a trustee after the AGM and was duly appointed at our meeting on 1 November. He will stand for election at the 2017 AGM, at which time he will begin the first year of his three-year term! We have had expressions of interest from other FOP members in becoming trustees and we will advise you in due course. Thank you to Henry, and, in advance, to the others for stepping up.

This all might seem rather bureaucratic and complicated, but we are following the guidance of the Charity Commission and, as procedures are different from how we operated in our first ten years, we thought it was worth spelling out. If you want to look at the constitution and the accompanying 'rules', they are on our web site, as are the 2016 AGM Minutes, Annual Report and Accounts at

<http://www.friendsofpittville.org.uk/about-friends-of-pittville/documents/>

Most of the trustees have a role; at the moment we have:

- Membership Secretary: Gloria Jones
- Newsletter Editor: Sandy Marshall
- Website and Facebook: Hilary Simpson
- Green Space Volunteer Co-ordinator: Chris Archibald, taking over from Fiona Clarke (who set up the group in November 2009)
- Pittville History Group liaison: Hilary Simpson (FOP member John Simpson is the project leader.)

Hon Treasurer

The more observant among you will have noticed that we don't have a Hon Treasurer! Our Chairman is filling that officer position at the moment, but this should not continue. She appeals to anyone who would be willing to try the job, even for one year. It is not that onerous compared to many charities. The constitution allows us to appoint to an officer position so not being elected at the AGM is not an obstacle!

If you want to find out more about the treasurer-ship; or have any questions or wish to clarify anything, in this article, please contact Hon Secretary on 01242 227 720.

Fiona Clarke

Pittville History Works

We welcomed Sara Salvidge, Learning Co-ordinator at the Holst Birthplace Museum, to our October meeting. Sara explained that the Holst was keen to develop the 'historic house' aspect of its work and to collaborate on matters of shared interest.

The group also welcomed Nick Tyson from the Regency Town House in Brunswick, Hove. Their project is now being extended with Heritage Lottery Fund support to all 'historic' (pre-1921) streets in Brighton and Hove. The award will fund the historical research and a website to present it, together with tours, talks, exhibitions, workshops and publications. Nick agreed to keep our group informed of progress and potential opportunities for collaboration.

We have all but finished the data collection for Pittville's nineteenth-century houses and residents, with Albert Road, Pittville Crescent,

and the southern end of Prestbury Road transcribed and currently being checked. It will take a month or so to confirm names and places, which the Victorian census enumerators sometimes scribbled down rather too quickly, and then we will need to recheck the census returns for any residence that we have overlooked.

In addition to the link with Brighton, we are gradually making contact with other groups looking at house histories, including Bedford Park in west London.

Hilary Simpson

Quiz Night Change of date

Friends of Pittville Quiz Night is now Monday 6 February 2017. The event was originally planned for Monday 30 January but the organiser, Amanda Slayton-Joslin, is unable to make it then and we certainly don't want to have the evening without her!

The venue is The Feathered Fish, 104 - 106 Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham GL52 2NW and the time is 7pm for 7.30pm start (prompt). It costs £5 per person to enter the quiz; food and drink to your own account. The Feathered Fish is offering two hamburgers for the price of one! Come before 7pm or stay on after if you like. If you plan to eat before the quiz, please tell event organiser, Amanda, how many people and what time you will arrive so she can prepare a table for you.

The quiz itself will last about 90 minutes (it is general knowledge with one set of questions about Pittville). Bring your own team (4-6 people) but this is not necessary as we will make up teams on the night.



Neck and neck: a tense finish in the play-off for 1st place at the Quiz in 2015.

There will be a raffle as well, raising funds of Friends of Pittville. If you have anything suitable that you want to get rid of or would like to donate, please tell Amanda.

There are places left so if you have not yet booked yours, please RSVP event organiser, FOP member

Amanda at amandaslaytonjoslin@gmail.com or telephone her on 07774 601 059 .

News from the Park: Green Flag and Green Heritage Site Accreditation



It was only a few months ago that we were in the Pump Room receiving our awards. However, we have to apply each year and the deadline for submitting our application is 31 January 2017. We have received the judges' comments and we will be taking them into account and revising the Management Plan. Fortunately we do not have a full inspection this time, only a visit from a 'mystery shopper' to see that we are keeping up to standard.

Chris Archibald

Car park attendants

Several of our Green Space Volunteers added to their skillset by manning the Cheltenham Borough Council-managed car park on Albemarle Gate during 'The Open' at Cheltenham Racecourse from 11-13 November last year.

We raised a tidy sum which will go towards our next big project, in the very early stages at the moment. CBC has invited us back for 'The Festival' (14-17 March) and we look forward to adding to the project fund.

Friends of Pittville Plant Sale



We will be holding our second plant sale on **Saturday 6 May**, in front of the Scout Hut – a date for your new diaries.

This is advance notice for all you keen gardeners to propagate some plants, divide the perennials

and search out all those stray seedlings in the spring. We will have nurseries supplying plants as last year and our usual raffle - any prizes gratefully received. Contact event co-ordinator Chris Archibald on chrisa.jill@talktalk.net

In spite of poor weather last year we had a lot of support from members donating plants and coming along to buy as well. Let's hope for better weather this year!

Cheltenham Horticultural Society

Spring Show: Sunday 2 April 2017, 12.00 to 15.30 at Pittville Pump Room. Admission £1.00 for adults, free for children under 16.

Refreshments are available in the Pump Room's own cafe.

Friends of Pittville will have a stand: come along and learn more about our plans for the future, look at our publications and meet some of our trustees and volunteers.

Drop Ins

Due to popular demand, we will still hold our monthly Drop Ins in 2017. When, in September, there were only two of us we thought it was all over, but in October and November there were eight each time, including some new people, and those attending were keen to continue. We had feedback that some do not like coming to a pub so we did investigate alternatives in the Pittville area.



Former Chairman Judy Langhorn tidying up after a busy Drop In.

Unfortunately, none is able to cater for all our needs, so we will continue at the Sudeley Arms. There is sufficient space; the service is efficient; the staff are very welcoming; the coffee is excellent, and there are free biscuits! And it is a great opportunity to give us your thoughts on what we do and to catch up on our activities and plans.

Dates for the first four months in 2017 are Wednesdays 25 January, 22 February, 29 March and 26 April. Put the dates in your diary now; and drop in any time between 11.00 and 12.30, at the Sudeley Arms, 25 Prestbury Road, GL52 2PN (near Pittville Gates).

Town Plan

The Pittville neighbourhood input for the Cheltenham Plan has now made some progress. A workshop took place on 30 November attended by nineteen Pittville residents. It was well facilitated by Elin Tattersall from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (who have been taken on by Cheltenham Borough Council to support local communities in this exercise). The participants came up with considerable input for the profile of Pittville as it is (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) and for the vision of how it should be (to influence local planning decisions).

The main concerns were about preserving the open spaces (not just for local residents), the sensible management of the extra traffic resulting from nearby developments and support for the ethos of co-operation in the local community. The information will be used by the Borough Council to put together the Town Plan.

There will be a public consultation period when the draft Plan has been published, sometime in the New Year Friends of Pittville as a group has already provided input for the Profile and Vision covering the green spaces.



Finally, some winter sunshine in Clarence Square. In his talk at the AGM, Adrian Barlow pointed out the lack of symmetry in some of the square's Victorian gates. Take a look next time you are passing! It is very subtle.

Newsletter editor: Sandy Marshall

Photos courtesy of Fiona Clarke, Desmond Marshall, Sandy Marshall, Terry Langhorn

Enquiries: 01242 227 720 **or**

secretary@friendsofpittville.org.uk

Registered charity number: 1146790