



October 2016

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 October newsletter from Friends of Pittville. This issue is delivered to all residents of Pittville and includes reports of some of the events of a busy summer. There is also information about several upcoming events with Pittville connections. By the time you receive your copy of the newsletter, these will be nearly upon us, so make sure you read pages 3 and 4!

Please also see page 4 for the details of our AGM on 18 October.

Your copy comes to you courtesy of a team of deliverers: many thanks to those who responded to our appeal for more volunteers to make this important task easier all round.

Summer Garden Party

On Sunday 14 August, nearly 50 Friends enjoyed an afternoon of tea, cake and conversation in the Pittville garden belonging to James and Judie Hodsdon. The weather was almost perfect, not too hot and no rain, and there was a delicious selection of homemade cakes to choose from.



There was a fine selection of homemade cakes

As a result of the afternoon over £300 was raised for FOP funds. Many thanks are due to all the helpers, committee members and other halves, who helped make it a success.

Judie Hodsdon

The Regency Town House, Hove



Brunswick Square, Hove: No 10 has been acquired by the Regency Town House project

During August the Pittville History Works Group enjoyed a visit to the Regency Town House project in Hove. It was fascinating to see this 1820s town house stripped back to basics and in the process of being restored using traditional materials and methods, and equally interesting to see another private estate from the same period as Pittville, developed along similarly speculative lines. As with all the best trips, we came home and looked at Pittville with fresh eyes and we plan to keep in touch with the project to share experiences and expertise.



Moulding detail from the Regency Town House: features such as this are being restored using traditional materials and methods

If you would like to receive regular email updates from the Pittville History Works Group, please contact us at info@pittvillehistory.org.uk

Hilary Simpson

Heritage Open Days

The Pittville History Works group organised two successful spa-themed walks around Pittville for this year's Heritage Open Days, led by our experienced and popular tour guides Judy Langhorn and Graham Gage. Both walks ended at the Pump Room and Graham's group was able to take the waters (which were unfortunately out of action on the day of Judy's walk). Four volunteers were also on hand during one of the open sessions at the Pump Room to answer visitors' questions and show them around – something that we would very much like to do on a more regular basis.



One of the walking groups did manage to take the waters at the Pump Room

Hilary Simpson

East India Café

The East India Café in the Promenade has generously adopted Friends of Pittville as their local charity and we have come to an arrangement whereby, if Friends of Pittville members dine at the Café, 10 per cent of their bill will be given to FOP. This also applies if members buy merchandise there or attend their masterclasses.

The restaurant specialises in Anglo-Indian cuisine, inspired by the time of the British Raj, the years between 1858 and 1947, when the British had rule over the Indian subcontinent. They take recipes and creations from the chefs and cooks of that period and then transform them with their own contemporary twists. They work with a number of local suppliers of the best produce, along with ingredients from far-flung places, to create the authentic taste of India. They also specialise in gin and tonic, cocktails and fruit punches.

The strong connection between the restaurant's cuisine and Pittville's history of Anglo-Indian residents was celebrated in a successful FOP dinner there last year. Another meal for members has been organised for **Sunday 20 November**.

Please save the date: more details will follow by email and on the Friends of Pittville website.

To find out more about the restaurant visit <http://www.eastindiacafe.com/>

They are also generously providing sponsorship for this edition of our newsletter.

The dragons of Central Cross Cafe - update

In the July newsletter distributed to members we printed an article by a local resident, Cressida Howard, who told the story of the lost dragons made by her mother, Connie Baker, for the roof of the café in Central Cross Drive. For those who did not see the earlier article, they looked like this:



In response to the article Terry Langhorn wrote: 'I was a member of the Pittville Area Residents' Association (PARA) at the time and remember Arthur Scruton (Chairman and founder of PARA) running a campaign in the early 1990s to raise the funds to get the dragons re-fitted on the café.'

Desmond Fitzgerald also remembered the incident and paid tribute to Connie Baker's efforts to adorn the Park in this way, and that replacements were made and put in place – twice, but that they too were stolen.

Cressida herself has since spoken to Linda McGeever, who worked on the project with her mother. Linda also said that two spares were made, and handed to the council, but has no recollection of their being seen after that.

If anyone else can throw any further light on the dragons, please email Cressida at cresshoward@gmail.com

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

On 21 July the Green Flag awards ceremony for the South West of England and Wales was held at the Pump Room. The Friends of Pittville provided delegates with information on the park and gave guided tours of the park and Pump Room. They even tried to persuade them to taste the spa water!

At the ceremony Pittville Park was awarded the Green Flag Award and the additional Green Heritage Site Accreditation. This is of great credit to Adam Reynolds, Janice Peacey and the Cheltenham Borough Council Green Space Development Team who have worked very hard over the last few years to bring the park up to a high standard. It is also a very big thank you to our green space volunteers (including Chris Archibald himself – Ed), an average of 20 at each session, who really make a difference and without whom we would not have won the awards.



The team at the award ceremony

This is not the end of the story: with ever more people using the park, we have to keep up the high standards to retain the awards. There is now a 10-year plan in place for the park and a number of improvements are planned, including how standards will be maintained.

If anyone would like to join a friendly bunch of volunteers, please come along for a couple of hours on the **1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 9.00 am.**

Please look out for the Green Flag (near the play area) and the Green Heritage plaque (on the Central Cross Cafe).

Chris Archibald

Town Plan

The Borough Council has begun the process of putting together the Local Plan for Cheltenham which will be used to guide planning decisions. As part of that process, neighbourhood groups have been invited to submit input for the Profile of their area, for a Vision covering improvements needed and an Action Plan to get there.

In Pittville this is being led by the Neighbourhood Coordination Group (NCG). FOP understands that there will be a meeting on **Monday 14 November, at 7 pm**, at Pittville School, and a subsequent meeting specifically on the plan, on **Wednesday 30 November.**

Friends of Pittville will submit input covering the Park and open spaces. FOP members will be advised in due course as to how they can input their views about their neighbourhood.

Judie Hodsdon

Upcoming events with Pittville connections

Expand your knowledge of Pittville's history with two more fascinating lectures: Dr Steven Blake, with John Simpson, of our Pittville History Group, will talk on *Pittville History Works: discovering Pittville's people and places*, at Prestbury Women's Institute Hall (the corner of Bouncers Lane and Prestbury Road) on **Monday 28 November, at 7.30 pm.** The meeting is organised by the Prestbury Local History Society. Non-PLHS members pay £2.

On 9 February 1842 Joseph Pitt, the developer of the Pittville Estate, died at the age of 83, with debts of at least £154,000. *Pittville after Pitt*, a talk by Steven Blake, will look at what happened next: the administration of Pitt's Estate by the Court of Chancery, the sale of the remaining building land at Pittville in 1843-5, the building of 62 new houses within the Estate between 1843 and 1890, and the Estate's management by the local surveyors, Engall, Sanders & Co. between 1842 and 1890, in which year the Pump Room and Gardens were sold to Cheltenham Corporation.

Steven's talk takes place in the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices, Promenade, on **Tuesday 13 December, at 7.30 pm.** This meeting is organised by the Cheltenham Local History Society as one of their regular evening lectures. Non-CLHS members pay £2.

Holst Birthplace Museum events

Supper evening and promises auction, Friday 21 October at 6.30 pm at The Beehive, 1-3 Montpellier Villas, GL50 2XE <http://www.thebeehivemontpellier.com> - which was designed by Pittville Pump Room architect, John Forbes! For HBM and Members of Friends of Pittville, the finger buffet will be followed an auction of about 30 prizes ranging from family tickets to a number of local tourist attractions to concert and theatre tickets to yoga classes. Proceeds from the auction will go to the Holst Birthplace Museum. Cost is £8 per head, and the Beehive needs numbers by **7 October.**

Please support The Holst in its restoration efforts after the summer flood. Because of the short notice, contact the Friends of Pittville Secretary (01242 227 720) **before the end of 6 October** if you wish to attend.

One other HBM event *The Holst Harp comes home*, at Cheltenham Ladies College, Princess Hall on **Saturday 12 November** is listed on our website events page
<http://www.friendsofpittville.org.uk/whats-happening/events>

There are more details on their own website
<http://holstmuseum.org.uk/whats-on>

Friends of Pittville AGM

A reminder that Friends of Pittville AGM will take place on **Tuesday 18 October 2016, at 6 pm**, at Dunalley Primary School. Our distinguished guest speaker will be Dr Adrian Barlow, whose many publications include titles on Victorian architecture. Dr Barlow will speak on Victorian Pittville.

This autumn marks the 10th anniversary of Friends of Pittville. Come along and celebrate the anniversary with us!

Trustees and volunteers needed!

Would you like to be part of shaping the future work and activities of Friends of Pittville?

We already have a wonderful set of volunteers who work in the Park (see the gallant three men in a boat collecting litter from the lake) or help with newsletter distribution, but we are now looking for new people to join the committee: we have a couple of vacancies for next year and some of us are getting near the end of our terms, but it's always good to have some new faces.



Three men in a boat: Graham Gage, William Lewis, Rob Rimell collecting litter from the lake in Pittville Park

If you are not sure about it you would be welcome to attend our meetings to find out if it is for you. If you are not keen on committees, you could have your name on a list of volunteers willing to help with FOP events: it would be good to have a wider pool of help available.

If you are at all interested please contact Fiona at secretary@friendsofpittville.org.uk or Judie at chairman@friendsofpittville.org.uk to find out more.

Would you like to meet other members?

We have a monthly 'drop in' at the Sudeley Arms, at 25 Prestbury Road, GL52 2PN (near Pittville Gates) where members, and anyone interested in learning more about Friends of Pittville, can meet current members and trustees. The drop ins are on the last Wednesday of every month between 11 am and 12.30. The coffee is very good and reasonably priced, and you can order something stronger of course!

Dates for the rest of 2016 are **26 October, 30 November** and **28 December**.

Do you have an email address?

"The Secretary and I have email addresses for many of our members - communicating this way cuts our costs considerably and saves time.

I know that some people are wary about letting too many organisations have their email address, but I can assure you all of our complete discretion. Your details would never be passed on to a third party under any circumstances.

If you have recently received an email from Friends of Pittville we already have your email, address so please do not send it again. If, however you receive notification of events, etc, by letter, this would indicate that we do not have your email address. If this is so, and you do have email, please contact me at the following address:

membership@friendsofpittville.org.uk "

*Gloria Jones
Membership Secretary*

Plant Sale - 2017!

Following the success (in spite of the weather) of this year's sale it is planned to hold another one, provisionally on Saturday 6 May, but this will be confirmed at a later date.

Plants grown by local residents were particularly popular, so this is advance notice to all gardeners out there who would like to contribute plants, to start planning and planting!

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