



FRIENDS of PITTVILLE

June 2023

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.

Fundraising events for 2023

Race week car parking

Despite the very difficult economic climate, we have managed, with the excellent help of our supporters, to raise a healthy amount of funds so far this year which will be used for our projects in the park. Once again, race week car parking organised by Henry Williams and Chris Archibald was the biggest fundraising event in our year. We had an outstanding level of support from our volunteers, who manned the car park throughout the four days of racing. Despite difficulties, such as our car park signs being removed by GCC Highways on the first day (but later retrieved), the inclement weather and the downturn in attendance from 2022, we still managed to raise £4792 towards park improvements, so a very big thank you to everyone involved.

Summer party fundraising event

Many of you may have attended the talk *Filming on the Front Line* last autumn by Oggy Boytchev, and he and his partner Julian have kindly offered to host an evening of cheese and wine in the garden of their house at 53 Pittville Lawn. In addition to a couple of glasses of wine and some cheese tasting, Steve Blake is coming to give us an insight into the history of the houses in Pittville Lawn, and we hope to have a poetry recital from Stephen Selby, a local poet and musician. We also plan to make a toast to the future of Fiona and Tom Clarke (see below).

The price of admission will be £20; please book your spaces – which are limited – so as not to miss out. This can be done by making payment in advance quoting the reference Summer Party by bank transfer to: Friends of Pittville; Barclays Bank sort code 20-20-15; account number 10154032. If you are unable to make a bank transfer, contact our treasurer Sarah and pay by cash or cheque. You can contact her at treasurer@friendsofpittville.org.uk Tel: 07798 870694. Please reserve your spaces by 23 June. We look forward to sharing an evening of fun with you.

Sally Thomas

Plant sale

Usually held in May, the plant sale was brought forward a little this year to avoid the Coronation weekend. We are grateful to local nurseries Ireley Hardy Plants, Malcolm Allison Plants and Hoo House Nursery, who all brought seasonal plants for sale on their stands. Plants donated by Cheltenham Horticultural Society and Friends of Pittville completed a very inviting show. Generous raffle prizes contributed to our income. Thanks to all who supported the sale, and to the Scouts for letting us use their hut and tables. We made a total of £566.45 towards ongoing improvements to the park.

Philippa Howell

Learn about biodiversity in Pittville Park

Two new information boards will be erected in the park in May. One will describe what might be seen in the lake habitat and the other in the wildflower meadow habitat based on the time of year.



The design of the content of the two boards has been a joint effort by the Cheltenham Borough Council Green Space Team and volunteers from Friends of Pittville. The graphic design was carried out by Springboard Graphics in Tewkesbury. There is a QR code on each board so the contents can be downloaded onto a smart phone.



The cost of producing the boards was covered by a grant from the Gloucestershire County Council Build Back Better Fund. A further grant has been applied for to produce a third board, describing the native tree habitat in the park. *Chris Archibald*

Coronation weekend

By tradition, coronations in Britain have been damp affairs and so it proved for the day of Charles III's. But the Coronation Community Celebration



organized by the Cheltenham Trust in Pittville Park came alive on Sunday as the sun broke through, and people turned out in their droves for the live music, dance sessions and children's activities. The fun continued throughout the day, culminating in the coronation concert live on the big screen, and the evening patriotic illumination of the Pump Room.

JUNE 17 and 18

Prestbury Open Gardens

Over a dozen gardens to explore, plants for sale, cream teas and a barbecue.

Details can be found at
www.prestburyopengardens.org

Cheltenham-wide GSVs Recognition Event

Some of our members recently attended the Green Space Volunteers Recognition Event at Emmanuel Church, organised by CBC's Green Space Team. The purpose was to recognise and thank the many people who volunteer in the green spaces around Cheltenham. Over a hundred people attended and many groups had stands to show their work. Ours, manned by Chris Archibald and Henry Williams, displayed pictures of the work done by the GSVs in Pittville Park and included a copy of the master plan for the east side between the Pump Room and the upper lake.



There was a photo album of Pittville Park past and present, and a slide show of volunteers at work. We had lots of interest from other volunteer teams. Adam Reynolds, Parks Manager, began with a speech of thanks for all the hard work the volunteers do and the many thousands of hours put in. This message was echoed by the mayor, Councillor Sandra Holliday, and was followed by an interesting talk on native trees by John Heathcote. Did you know, for example, that the UK has one of the lowest proportions of tree coverage in Europe, mainly because of felling associated with shipbuilding in Britain from the 16th century onwards, followed by the impact of the industrial revolution. The good news is that we have the largest collection of ancient trees, many over a thousand years old. *Henry Williams*

Cheltenham Horticultural Society Summer Show

The Summer Show of Cheltenham Horticultural Society takes place in the Pittville Pump Room on 20 August. There are many classes open to non-members and full details can be found on the website at www.cheltenhamhorticultural.co.uk The Pump Room will be open to the public from 12.30 to 3.30. There will also be stalls selling plants, cakes, books and cards.

Who runs the cafes in the park?

Susannah Moffat, a local entrepreneur native to Gloucester, is not only mum to her eight-year-old stepson and eighteen-month-old son with her husband Olly Arnold, but she is also the founder and CEO of In The Park Ltd.



*Susannah Moffat,
CEO and founder of
In The Park Ltd at
one of her four
outlets, Central
Cross Cafe*

'I set up my business, Cheltenham Coffee Company, opening my first outlet, Central Cross Cafe, in March 2011. Alongside business partner Jenny Moss, who came on board in 2014, we built the business, adding three more cafes along the way – the Boathouse and the play area Kiosk, both in Pittville Park, as well as a cafe in Montpellier Gardens. Then we created the parent company In The Park Ltd and ran other initiatives including cafes at the Lido here in Cheltenham and another in St Michael's Park in Cirencester.

My husband Olly, who worked initially at the Boathouse, has recently joined me in running the business after being instrumental in helping to set up a central Head Office in Tewkesbury in 2016. Here he built our commercial kitchen enabling us to expand and unify our food offer, thereby maximising cost efficiencies instead of using the four much smaller individual cafe kitchens.

We have been immensely grateful to our loyal team of staff, not least our Operations Manager Harriet Davey (winner of Gloucestershire Business Awards' Employee of the Year, who has been with me since the start), for their ongoing hard work.'

What stands out in your time here? 'The Boathouse contract requires us to act as bailiff of the fishing lake, entailing a daily patrol of the area to ensure wildlife and livestock are safe and well. We have the responsibility of checking that fishing in the lake is carried out legally. Outstanding memories include occasional animal rescues like

when a duck is caught in fishing line. It's all in a day's work.'

Have you enjoyed your last 12 years in business? 'I thrive on being my own boss – Olly and I are probably unemployable in real life – and I love Pittville Park. It has become my second home.'

John Holloway

The 2023 race festival – better or worse?

In March 2022 there were unprecedented levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) during Cheltenham Festival race week, which had a major impact on the Pittville area over all four days. One of the principal factors last year was the number of racegoers – almost 281,000 over the meeting. The Jockey Club decided to cap the numbers at 68,500 per day this year, which would have resulted in a total gate of 274,000. In the event, only Gold Cup Day sold out, and final numbers indicated a drop of 25,000 for the week.

The Jockey Club (JC) joined with Cheltenham Borough Council's Public Protection Department, Gloucestershire Police and Cheltenham Business Improvement District (BID) to coordinate efforts to improve residents' experience during race week. Our local councillors, Stephan Fifield and Julian Tooke, met with the JC to discuss how the police and Police Community Support Officers would extend their presence in the area, supported by council neighbourhood officers. It was anticipated that the 'Love Our Turf' campaign, backed by 50 marshals, the police and the neighbourhood team would be a significant deterrent to ASB. The introduction of a police presence on Evesham Road and its tributary roads made a major difference to the ASB at the November meeting, and this was reinforced in March by eleven additional pairs of officers on New Barn Lane, Swindon Lane and Albert Road. More rigorous enforcement of parking restrictions also had a positive impact on traffic flow.

After the 2022 Festival, the JC received almost 400 complaints from local residents. This year, on Tuesday and Wednesday, a total of five complaints were received. Every individual was visited by 8am the following morning, and there was an immediate response to the several constructive suggestions, resulting in some relocation of stewards and toilets. On Thursday and Friday there were no complaints. There were however a considerable number of messages of thanks to the JC for the efforts made to bring about noticeable improvements. One additional point is that the increased policing of both pedestrian and vehicle traffic on Evesham Road impacted on other tributary roads, particularly Paddocks Lane and Tommy Taylor's Lane. Although every effort was

made to ensure that taxi drivers were aware of changes to pick-up points, there were many instances when these instructions were ignored. This is one of the points which will be addressed next year. The situation seems to have improved in 2023, and by maintaining contact with the JC and local councillors, hopefully further improvement will be possible next year. *Janina Kay*

A farewell to Pittville

This photo may explain why, after seventeen years

of living in Cheltenham, we are leaving the UK to return to our roots – in Australia. This photo was taken on Christmas Day in 2020 (during Covid lock-down) and you can see the champagne is sitting on the frozen birdbath. But seriously, after me leaving Friends of Pitt-



ville as a trustee (2006-2019), and Tom as a trustee at the Holst Victorian House (2015-2021) and increasing in years, we have decided to be nearer to our respective families for our very old age. It will be a huge wrench after nearly fifty years living in the UK (London, a village in Leicestershire and Manchester before Cheltenham) and overseas (Philippines and Japan). We have enjoyed living in Pittville and have made many friends, some of whom know Australia already. You are very welcome to visit us in Ballarat, a small city eighty miles west of Melbourne in Victoria. For those who have never been, this is a chance to have someone on hand to show you around. *Fiona and Tom Clarke*

All Saints Church historic organ

Sponsor an organ pipe



The organ in Grade 1 listed All Saints church was built in 1887 by Hill & Son to a design by (among others) Aldolph von Holst, Gustav Holst's father, the organist at the time. Changes

were made to the organ over the years, but now £500,000 is needed for major repairs, restoration, cleaning and rebuilding. As part of the appeal for donations, a website (www.sponsorapipe.co.uk) encourages you to sponsor any of the 2609 pipes by allowing you to listen to the different sounds before choosing one. You can also pick a tune and then sponsor the pipes needed to play it (www.sponsorapipe.co.uk/sponsor-a-tune).

Even if you are not interested in donating, the website has a wealth of fascinating information about an important local treasure. *Joc Potter*

Pump Room steps update

The Pump Room steps restoration project is now on track to begin later in the summer. The tender process has taken place and an affordable bid, despite some inevitable inflation in costs, was submitted. Work will begin after some events, scheduled to take place in front of the Pump Room in June, have happened. *Judie Hodsdon*

 Cotswold Sculptors Association **Creating Spaces 2023**

SCULPTURE EXHIBITION



1 June - 30 July 2023
Open Wednesday to Sunday 10-5 including bank holidays. Please note that the garden does not permit dogs (other than assistance dogs).

THE GARDEN

AT MISERDEN

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