



January 2018

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

Happy New Year and welcome to the first newsletter of 2018 from Friends of Pittville. This issue is delivered to all members.

All the groups that make up FOP have been active during last autumn and many of their activities are mentioned in this newsletter. Please take time to read the important announcement about the new data protection regulations!

News from the park: young volunteers



Colourful young volunteers enjoyed sweeping up autumn leaves and litter-picking in Pittville Park.

One day in the autumn the Green Space Volunteers were delighted to be joined by a small group of local home-educating mums and their children, who helped to sweep up leaves and pick up litter in the park. They enjoyed the experience and will be joining the volunteers again in the spring.

General Data Protection Regulations

You may already be aware of the **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPRs)** which come into effect in May 2018. Their intention is to ensure that any organisation holding personal data is transparent and accountable for the way in which it is used.

Friends of Pittville is affected by this as we hold information about you as members. Later in the New Year we will get in touch with all members to confirm what personal information we hold, what we use it for and to ensure you know what your rights are in relation to this data. In the meantime be assured that we only hold information that you have provided (i.e. name and contact details) and that access to it is controlled. We will not share information with anyone else without permission from you.

Judie Hodsdon

Pittville History Works

Pittville History Works group has expanded its focus into the twentieth century, with members now transcribing information from the 1911 census and the 1939 register.



When war broke out in 1939, the British government took a register of the civil population.

A number of projects are also being researched, including the history of the shops on Prestbury Road; schools in Pittville; Pittville households with slavery connections; the origins of Pittville house names; and the Pittville Pageant of 1908. Articles added to the website this year include Sue Jones on 'Florence Earengy and Women's Suffrage in Cheltenham' and Julian Holland's historical look at 'Black Swans on Pittville Lake'.



Pittville shops: Badham's, when it was still Newenham's.

Project leader John Simpson gave a short talk at the AGM entitled '10,000 histories – the people of 19th century Pittville', in which he told the stories of several early residents of the estate. He contrasted two walks: one by Captain George Schreiber, turning out of the front door of his home, Roden House, on Pittville Lawn in 1861 to stroll towards the Pump Room and meeting a succession of Wellington's generals and other senior military officers on the way. On a similar excursion made by his daughter Agnes in 1901, she was as likely to meet wage-earners (tradespeople, teachers, etc.) as the wealthy spinsters and retired generals who had dominated the early years of Pittville.

Hilary Simpson

Drop-Ins at the Sudeley – calling time?

For the last four years we have had a monthly 'Drop-In' for members and prospective members on the last Wednesday of the month. Over that time about sixty people have come but, for whatever reasons, the return rate is not high. The core group has become top heavy with trustees and, although it is enjoyable, we do not think it is meeting the original objectives any more.

However, if there is a member who would be willing to revitalise the idea, and who is willing to attend regularly (not necessarily every time), the trustees would agree to continue them. Contact secretary@friendsofpittville.org.uk or phone Fiona on 01242 227720.

If we do not hear from anyone by the end of Wednesday 24 January, the final and farewell Drop-In will be on Wednesday 31 January 2018 (between 11 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. at the Sudeley Arms, Prestbury Road). Everyone is welcome of course!

Fiona Clarke

Tree planting

In June the Green Space Volunteers applied for a grant of 400 native trees from the Woodland Trust, and in September we learned that we had been successful. We agreed with Cheltenham Borough Council that these would be planted to strengthen the wildlife area in the land west of Tommy Taylors Lane.

The trees arrived in November and were planted by a team of volunteers. The trees are small cuttings, or whips, about 300-400 mm high, so we are planting them for our grandchildren. We will look after them in the coming years and hope they grow as well as the Woodland Trust trees that were planted in 2012 at the east end of the Agg Gardner playing field.



The tree-planting group who planted 400 native trees in November 2017.

We are grateful to the GSVs for putting in over 1000 hours of work into the park in 2017. This has made a big difference. Thanks too to our community ranger Janice for supervising the working parties.

Chris Archibald

Races car park

The Green Space Volunteers also ran the Albermarle Road car park for the November race meeting. £3900 was raised from this and the earlier Gold Cup Week, which will go towards improvements to the park.

In partnership with Cheltenham Borough Council, the team were pleased to report that customers are returning! The parking is well organised, with an easy get-away guaranteed, and security. Henry Williams and his team worked from putting out the A-boards at 7 a.m. until closing at 5 p.m. As you can see from the photo, they had to make a 'Full' sign and were having to turn people away.



A well organised and successful operation for race goers in November.

Learning in Pittville Park

For a long time Friends of Pittville has seen the park as a learning resource: the considerable knowledge gained through the History Works Group and Green Space Volunteers could be offered to schools. The park is often visited by groups of school children, some just walking from local schools and others travelling some distance.

A small group of volunteers has been set up to put together information about the park on the Friends of Pittville website in a form that could be readily used by teachers visiting the park. This information might be base maps, maps showing the position of native trees and information on them at the different seasons, wildflowers, birds, the social history of the park and the people who made it.

The group has obtained a Community Pride grant of £1000 from Cheltenham Borough Council. Friends of Pittville will match this funding to take the project forward.

If anyone, particularly teachers, would like to help with ideas on what would be helpful, it would be very much appreciated. Please contact the secretary at FOP – details are on the back page of this newsletter.

Plant Sale 2018– save the date!

Friends of Pittville will be holding their third plant sale, this year on Saturday 5 May, from 10-1 p.m. in Pittville Park. This is advance warning for all keen gardeners and growers to note the date and start planting! The plant contributions made by members are always one of the most popular features of the sale.



Alongside the bedding plants, those grown by members are a popular feature of the plant sale.

Quiz Night

Amanda Slayton-Joslin has again kindly agreed to organise another quiz night for Friends of Pittville, on Monday 5 February 2018, at our usual venue, The Feathered Fish, 104-106 Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham GL52 2NW; 7 p.m. for a prompt 7.30 p.m. start. Entry is £5 per person, with food and drink to your own account.

The quiz itself lasts about 90 minutes, with general knowledge questions in addition to one set of questions about Pittville. Bring your own team of 4-6 people, or come along and join a team for the night. Contact Amanda at amandaslaytonjoslin@gmail.com or telephone her on 07774 601 059.

Office bearers

At the first Friends of Pittville trustee meeting after the AGM, the trustees chose the following office bearers:

Hon Chairman - Judie Hodsdon
Hon Secretary - Fiona Clarke
Hon Treasurer - Paul Benfield

Other roles agreed included:

Membership Secretary - Gloria Jones
Green Space Volunteers Co-ordinator - Chris Archibald
Pittville History Works representative - Hilary Simpson
Website and Facebook manager - Hilary Simpson

If anyone would like to read the minutes of the 2017 AGM, these are on our website at <http://www.friendsofpittville.org.uk/about-friends-of-pittville/documents/>, along with the Chairman's Report and the Accounts.

The Pittville Zoo

In the 1830s the residents of Cheltenham were keen to make the town even more popular with visitors, and so they came up with the idea of setting up a zoo. They hoped to rival the competition already on offer in the zoological gardens of London and Bristol.

The concept was so appealing that both Pittville and The Park wanted to host it, and they couldn't agree on a compromise. Not long ago a plan of Pittville's projected zoological gardens was discovered, and Cheltenham local historian Stuart Manton took on the task of researching and writing up the story. You can read the tale of hope and frustration on the Pittville History Works website *Cheltenham's Zoo Wars: the proposed Zoological Gardens in Pittville and The Park in the 1830s*.



The area of the proposed zoo for Pittville. (Imagery copyright 2017 Google; map data copyright 2017 Google)

An 'Enclosure for Wolves', a 'House and Paddock for Rhinoceros' - had they really thought this through?

John Simpson



Two recent scenes from Pittville: the Boathouse in December and new growth in a nearby garden. 'O wind, if winter comes, can spring be far behind?'

Windsor Street allotments update

The two allotments mentioned in the October newsletter have been allocated to local residents. If anyone would like to register their interest and have their name put on a list, please ring Bill Harvey (01242 541149).

As mentioned in the previous letter, allotments are about 3 m x 3 m, initial registration is £20 and then £10 each September, the start of the allotment year.

Newsletter editor: Sandy Marshall

Photos courtesy of Fiona Clarke, William Lewis, Sandy Marshall, Janice Payne, Hilary Simpson and Henry Williams.

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Registered charity number: 1146790

