



# FRIENDS *of* PITTVILLE

March 2020

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 March edition of the newsletter. Spring should be around the corner by the time you read this, and spring is the time when the park comes alive with blossom and activity. This issue focuses on events in the park. It draws attention to some new initiatives in the Pump Room and to other events that have become annual features of the calendar.

## Events in Pittville Park

I don't know about you, but I sometimes find it difficult to know what events are happening in Pittville Park, and all too often don't hear about something really interesting until it's already happened. While information about public performance events in the Pump Room is available on the Cheltenham Trust, *SoGlos* and Pump Room websites, other interesting events and classes may not be. Yet within the Pump Room and outside in the Park there is a huge range of *public* and *community* events and classes run by, for example, exercise groups, dance enthusiasts, sports teams, dog groups, bird watchers, camera clubs, green volunteers, mothers' groups, flower groups, reading groups ... The list is very long. There seems to be a need for a better listing of this type of community event and we are going to try to make it the Friends of Pittville Facebook page.

**So, we would like to publicise your event FREE. If you are involved in any events at all in the park, and would like people to know about them, please send information to the Facebook page or to the newsletter email address, and we will add it to our events listing.**

I had a very interesting talk recently with Sara Oliver, Head of Communications and Marketing at The Cheltenham Trust, about some new types of events being promoted in the Pump Room.

## Cheltenham Trust events

### Pop up café at the Pump Room

Half term in February saw the successful opening of an all-day pop-up café over five days, and the hope is that this will be a regular feature on weekends in future.

This is something that local people and visitors have been wanting for a long time, and it will be a great asset to the park.

### Cheltenham Festival packages

Race packages are available to racegoers from 10-13 March, and there will also be a pop-up drinks stand and food stalls outside the Pump Room.

### Mothering Sunday at the Pump Room

Another initiative is to offer meals for special occasions, and Mother's Day is a great day to launch it. For £30 per head, you get a three-course lunch, with a pianist, starting at 12 noon. Diners receive a welcome drink and a gift for mothers, and there's a children's menu. Full details are below.

Celebrate  
**Mother's Day**

Pittville Pump Room  
Sunday 22 March, 12pm  
**£30 per person**

**10% OFF** using code **MOTHER10**

Three course lunch  
Welcome drink  
Gift for mothers

To view the menu and book please visit  
[www.cheltenhamtownhall.org.uk](http://www.cheltenhamtownhall.org.uk) or call 0844 576 2210

Pittville Pump Room  
East Approach Drive, Cheltenham, GL52 3JE

CHELTENHAM TRUST  
THE CHELTENHAM TRUST

## Other events

### Cheltenham Wine Festival in the Pump Room

The Cheltenham Wine Festival will be held in the Pump Room on 4 April this year. The festival is run by the Rotary Club of Cheltenham North, with all profits going to charity. The last four festivals raised a total of £35,000 for good causes. Enjoy your favourite wines and have fun discovering new ones from countries including France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, South

Africa, Chile, Argentina and the USA. Exhibitors are wine experts with a passion for all the wines they are showcasing. Visitors will be able to taste, discover and learn about different wine styles, grape varieties and the people and special places behind them. Wines will be available to purchase on the day, along with tickets for the BIG raffle.

Tickets are £25 per person, in advance, for attendance at one of the two sessions: 12-3pm or 4-7pm. The price includes all wine samples on the day, a wine glass, a jute festival bag, a festival 'passport' showing all the wines on offer, and a pen to make notes. Tickets are available online from a range of ticket agencies.

### **Cheltenham Horticultural Society Show**

Cheltenham Horticultural Society Spring Show will take place on Sunday 5 April from 12.30 – 3.30pm at the Pump Room. Admission is £2.00 and children under twelve are free.

### **Pride Picnic in the Park**

After the success of last year's event, Pride in Gloucestershire will be holding a Picnic in the Park again this year on Sunday 17 May. Expect an afternoon of music, entertainment, food and drink.



### **Ceroc dance classes in the Pump Room**

Who knew there were Ceroc dance classes in the Pump Room every Monday, and an annual Masquerade Ball? More information at [www.ceroc.com](http://www.ceroc.com) > [ceroc-cheltenham](http://ceroc-cheltenham)

*Andy Hopkins*

## **Cheltenham Lottery Success**

The Cheltenham Lottery was set up last autumn by Cheltenham Borough Council to raise money for local good causes and Friends of Pittville is one of them. To date, FoP supporters have bought 26 tickets and won eight prizes in the first fourteen draws. That means £170 has been raised to help fund our improvement projects in Pittville Park, and we are on track to raise £676 in the first year. However, we have a target of at least fifty tickets, so now is the time to think about becoming a supporter yourself and help raise even more.



Every £1 lottery ticket raises 50p for your chosen good cause but also 10p for Cheltenham's ground-breaking campaign 'No Child Left Behind'. This helps Cheltenham's disadvantaged children to take part in activities that most of us take for granted that we can afford. Over 2000 children have benefitted already. FoP supporters will therefore have contributed £155 to this wonderful initiative by the end of the first year. This is another very good reason to sign up to buying lottery tickets.

It is worth saying that the other 40p from each ticket goes towards prizes and administration - nothing goes to the Borough Council itself.

So please do think about becoming a supporter. It's very simple to enrol, to decide how many tickets to buy and then choose your numbers. All you have to do then is just wait for the email that says you have won!

You can find out more on the Lottery website, [www.cheltenhamlottery.co.uk](http://www.cheltenhamlottery.co.uk). Look for Friends of Pittville in the list of good causes. Good luck!

*Judie Hodsdon*

## **Friends of Pittville Annual Plant Sale**

**Saturday 2 May 10am-1.00pm**

**Central Cross Drive**

outside the Scout Hut

Plants from Dundry Nurseries, Hoo House, Malcolm Allison, Ireley Plants, Cheltenham Horticultural Society and FoP members. Donations of plants are very welcome.



## Green Space Volunteers

The GSVs continue to work in the park every first and third Thursday of the month. In 2019 there was an average of twenty-one volunteers at each working party, and in total they contributed 964 hours of work to the park. The volunteers do not replace the council staff, but in these times of tight budgets we carry out tasks that would otherwise not get done, to maintain and improve the appearance of the park. Apart from the usual tasks, the GSVs have been working on three projects.

### Restoration of the rockery adjacent to the upper lake

The GSVs have been working with the council to restore the west end of the rockery. The rocks have been cleared, some retrieved from the lake and replaced and a temporary protective fence erected. New soil has been added and the first phase of planting carried out. There are some perennial weeds in the rockery that need to be eradicated so that a second phase of planting can be carried out next Autumn.



### Restoration of Bed 38

This is the bed in the south-west corner of the east side of the park near the junction of Evesham Road and Wellington Road. The volunteers have cleared and reshaped the bed leaving only the very old yew tree and a pear tree. They plan to plant new cherry trees and decorative shrubs.

### Improvements around the Pump Room

FoP members continue to raise money to reinstate the steps in front of the Pump Room and to replace the Approach gates. All money raised by volunteers running the Albemarle Gate car park during race week this year will again go towards this effort.

## Urban Greening Project

Cheltenham Borough Council Green Space Development team has secured European Union Regional Development Funding to desilt some areas of Pittville Park lakes and undertake habitat

improvements. The proposed work will help reduce flooding downstream and bank erosion, improve water quality and wildfowl and aquatic habitats. Some clearance work has already started adjacent to the south-east corner of the upper lake and you can now see the very fine old yew trees. The dredging works are out to tender at present and this work is due to take place between April and June this year. Look out for more details on the park notice board, near the underpass in the east side of the park, in due course.

## Sir David Jason visits Pittville Park



Sir David Jason of *Only Fools and Horses* fame was in Pittville Park at the end of last year to shoot scenes for his new series 'Great British Inventions' in which he was featuring the Sinclair C5. The programme was broadcast on the 21 January and can be seen on More 4 catchup.

*Chris Archibald*

## Gardening in the spring



It is too early to put in summer bedding but there are plenty of bulbs and plants available for current planting to fill in the gap between spring and summer. For pots, containers and at the front of borders, violas, pansies, primroses and polyanthus are ideal. Primroses and polyanthus come in many different shades and can, with some care, be kept from year to year.



Spring would not be the same without daffodils, of course. There are many varieties available. Tete a Tete and Minnow are short stemmed, while Jetfire and February Gold are slightly bigger. Taller varieties are Dutch Master, Spellbinder, Carlton, Hawera and Tahiti. After flowering, dead head and feed with a potash-based fertiliser and water freely. Foliage should not be removed before seven weeks.

Other bulbs which add colour are crocuses, chionodoxa, scillas and tulips. Again, feed with a high potash fertiliser after flowering. And of course, now is the time to begin giving some attention to the lawn. Rake out accumulated thatch and moss, spike and feed.

*David Richards*

## FoP Quiz Night

Our annual fundraising Quiz Night was held at the Feathered Fish on 24 February. Fifty-two Friends of Pittville and their guests competed in the challenge and enjoyed a congenial evening with food and drink and a raffle. We raised £276 and the funds will go towards Pittville Park projects and ongoing maintenance.



Thank you to Paul the Quizmaster, Andy from the Feathered Fish and everyone who contributed prizes and helped to make the night such a success.

*Philippa Howells*

## Pittville History Works News

Among the projects currently underway by the Pittville History Works group is one to study the 'building history' of the 242 houses that were constructed in the original Pittville Estate between 1825 and 1890. Its aim is to establish the year in which each house was built and, where possible, to identify its architect, builder and first purchaser, along with the price of both the land and the completed house.

The project is being undertaken by Dr Steven Blake, the former Museum & Collections Manager at Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, and builds on the work he did back in the 1980s for his book *Pittville 1824-1860: a Scene of Gorgeous Magnificence* (1988), the full text of which is now available on the Pittville History Works website.

A major source for that study was the early title deeds of around 150 of the houses, most of which were seen by courtesy of their owners, and he has already begun contacting the owners of some of the other houses to ask if he might see their pre-1900 deeds, if these have survived. He has also begun to look at the history of the 30 houses that were built after 1860, including contacting owners in the hope of seeing those deeds as well.



All the houses built after 1860 were on land sold at auction after Joseph Pitt's death in 1842; among them were the large detached houses on the west side of Evesham Road, north of Central Cross Drive, two of which are illustrated here. These seven houses were built between 1873 and 1888 by a prominent local builder, Edwin Broom.

Steve's findings will gradually be added to the Pittville History Works website, and if you would like to learn more about the history of the Estate in the years following Pitt's death, **Steve is giving a talk entitled 'Pittville after Pitt' at Pittville School on Friday, October 30, the proceeds of which will be shared jointly by the Friends of Pittville and the Holst Birthplace Museum.**

### Editor

Andy Hopkins

### Photos

Henry Williams, Andy Hopkins,  
Chris Archibald, Steven Blake,  
The Cheltenham Trust

### Contact FoP at

Telephone: 01242 227720

Email: [secretary@friendsofpittville.org.uk](mailto:secretary@friendsofpittville.org.uk) or  
[newsletter@friendsofpittville.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@friendsofpittville.org.uk)

Website [www.friendsofpittville.org.uk](http://www.friendsofpittville.org.uk)

Facebook Friends of Pittville

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