

FRIENDS OF THRINGSTONE

MINUTES OF MEETING 15 November 2007

In Attendance:

Nita Pearson, Pam Porter, Bernard Lee, Lorraine Whitehurst, Ray Neal, Jan Cufflin, Margaret Smith, Jo Johnson, Ann Petty, Sandie and Tony Newton, Tracey Foulds, Ray Woodward, Janet Stevenson, Colin Perritt, Geoff Walker & Geoff Wilson.

Apologies recieved from:

Rowena Summers, Clr Pam Clayfield, John & Karon Smith, Chris Mellor, Rod Evans, Mike Statham, Tam Bream, John Dickson, Bill Newton, Brenda Simpson & Jane Wilson.

Minutes of last meeting:

Accepted as circulated.

Treasurers Report

Balance b/wd	£905.44	
Receipts	£100.00	RW events insurance
	£20.00	Sale of calendars
Expenditure	£100.00	Event insurance premium
	£74.09	Printing costs.
Balance c/wd	£851.35	

Secretary's Report

No correspondence received directly.

NP delivered to the secretary a letter from CVS with correspondence from ASDA re proposed new store development in Coalville, newspaper cutting on the subject of proposed development noted above, a copy of NWLDC Vision Magazine containing announcement of FOT Christmas Fayre a Copy of Thringstone Primary School November 2007 Newsletter containing details of FOT giving NP as a point of contact.

Website report

John reported to the meeting through NP that the site was up to date and that he was still investigating the acquisition of a suitable domain name.

History Project

NP reported that Rowena no longer wished to lead this project and that Ann Petty had bravely stepped up to the plate. She further reported that Jan was still intending to make contact with the Whitwick Historic Society but was delayed because her contact was away on a cruise.

Councillors' Reports

Nothing to report due to the absence of all councillors.

Guest Speaker – Simon Greenhouse – National Forest Company Woodland Maintenance Officer

Simon began by outlining the work of the National Forest company and the current position which is that some 17% of the area which they concern themselves with has forest cover. Most of this is privately owned and planted but with public access. They work with partners including landowners, The Woodland Trust, local Councils and of course The Forestry Commission, and 7 million trees have already been planted across the National Forest area.

Occasionally the opportunity arises for the Company to acquire parcels of land suitable for their purpose and in line with the company's aims, and if funding allows, they will take ownership and manage the land by planting trees or thinning as appropriate to progress their policy guidelines which are to:-

- Improve the landscape
- Improve wildlife habitat
- Improve the environment
- To provide wetland areas in appropriate locations
- To allow fallow areas to develop as woodland meadows
- To improve recreational amenity

Swannymote Wood close by Swannymote Rock is one such piece of land that the company now owns, bringing the opportunity to practice what is preached in the guidelines above.

The work is being carried out by with the help of volunteers where possible but obviously using contractors for specialist work or tasks beyond the point where sheer manpower is inadequate. This of course brings two further benefits in that it supports the local economy and provides a social benefit for the volunteers who take part. These works are graded and may for instance be a small planting of between 1 and 2000 trees or larger works to create a one-acre wood. 6 hectares has already been planted to link up with existing trees.

Swannymote Rock, an ancient meeting place ('mote' is an Anglo Saxon word meaning 'meet') is not within the boundaries of the wood. However the aim is to create the shape of a mound or series of mounds to represent the stones of the rock with seating to form a viewing point from which visitors will be able to enjoy the landscape panorama to the north. It was agreed that the views needed to be maintained and also enjoyed by all.

The other immediate project is to create 'seasonal ponds' to encourage aquatic wildlife such as frogs and newts. The creation of stone benches is another option to explore, and repairing of stone walls is another.

Volunteer groups who have been involved to date include the B.T.C.V. (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers) and The EM Airport volunteers who are making bat and bird boxes. This information immediately raised the question would FOT wish as a group to be involved in giving assistance?

It was agreed that we should as a group arrange to visit the wood in the spring of 2008 (possibly April or May) with Simon to see the work and decide how best to proceed.

Simon explained that the National Forest Company have 2 tree schemes for small scale planting of up to an acre and also have a free tree scheme.

Discussion took place on signage. As Thringstone is part of the National Forest, now has village signage confirming this, and there has been tree planting within the Grace Dieu area, Thringstone itself should appear on the maps that the National Forest produce. Simon agreed to mention this in the office.

Christmas Fayre (Saturday 8th December 2007)

Another event meeting took place on 15 October, and the minutes were available for that for people who haven't seen them. Donations of wine and other items were received for our own stall at the event. Posters were ready to be handed out.

Those people who have agreed to take posters to shops needed to do this now. A risk assessment form had been prepared. A programme with flyer on the back has also been prepared at the cost of £8.63. Those people on raffle or meet and greet will need to hand these out to people coming into the event. Nita will probably be doing this with Rowena.

Nita has sent out press releases to OAK FM, Saga Radio, Radio Leicester, Heart 106, NWL radio, Leicester Sound, Nu News (Castle Donington) and Burton Mail and Burton Trader, Coalville Echo, Times, Mercury, Free Leader, Ashby Herald, Ashby Mail, Ashby Trader and Echo. A further set of releases will be sent out 2 weeks before the event. Nita has emailed info to Ashby TIC, to Friends of Holly Hayes and other local people who have contacted her in the past by email.

As a result of the article in The Vision, we had several calls from other craft people interested in joining us. As we are already subscribed to capacity for the Christmas Fayre, we have suggested they have a think about our September 08 event.

We will need volunteers to help with the set up and take down. Access to the CC to set stalls etc. will not be possible until 10.00pm on Friday 7 December and volunteers were therefore sought for that time and at 7.00am on Saturday 8 December to carry out this work in preparation for the event. A number of people put their names forward. We also need people who are donating things to the stall or the raffle or for the wine and water to let us have them so that we can get them wrapped, and then leave put them securely away at the centre the night before the event. Please can all members note this. We still need donations for the raffle and the wine and water and need Christmas decorations for the grotto. Thanks go to Rowena for the 2 boxes full of things.

We also need carrier bags for our stall and for people who win raffle prizes to take their prizes away in. Please bring those to the next meeting or the events meeting on 22nd November.

We needed to have a PA system of some description at the event because of the need to have music upstairs and the need for the Councillor opening the event to be heard. Ray W has got this organised through Carillon radio for no charge.

We also needed more tables than the centre had available, so Ray W has organised this with Chris Matchett.

An evaluation form has been prepared for stall holders and for visitors. Copies of these were available to look at.

Ray Woodward will be taking photos of the stalls, collecting stall fees where applicable, talking to them during the day and will also deal with the dishing out of evaluation forms to them. Others will be asked to hand out the visitor evaluation and collect them back. These evaluation forms will be useful for future event planning. Evaluation forms have also been done to give out to visitors, asking questions about where they are from, and on the community centre. Information gathered will then be shared with the centre.

Jan Cufflin said that the choir would like to rehearse a week before, and a date for this was agreed with Lorraine.

School fete

The school's Christmas fayre is 7th Dec, which is set up night for our event and runs from 3.30-5.30pm. Ann Petty has agreed to do this for us. The school continue to mention Friends of Thringstone in their newsletters.

Summer event

We are still working on the summer event and contacting people who have expressed an interest in coming along, and have managed to get sponsorship promises, and £50 from Quiet Storm who have received a thank you letter and will become honorary members.

Publications update and distribution returns

Snibston Discovery Park have taken some publications on a sale or return basis. We have only 10 Born and Bred 1 left, whereas we have 88 B & B 2. We have 43 village trail leaflets, 61 village trail 2 leaflets and 67 village trail 3 leaflets. This does not include those out on placement.

Planting at the side of 181 Main Street.

Norah Newton has indicated that she is interested in donating a generous sum of money to help with the planting of this area and others within the village. This is in addition to the money we have in funding from NWLDC. Trees ordered from the nursery have been delayed because they are waiting for all the leaves to fall. These should be ready in about 2 weeks maximum.

Calendars

We still have calendars available to purchase. Supplies have gone to various local businesses and groups, but we still have stocks which need to find a good home. It was decided that we didn't need to order more calendars. Calendar sales were slow at some outlets, and it was agreed that these needed to be gathered in and redistributed. Geoff Walker suggested that a calendar should be sent to The Squire de Lisle. Nita said she had purchased some of the Grace Dieu Christmas cards to send to all sponsors etc., and would send the calendar to The Squire at the same time.

Funding sources – The WI agreed to fund the publication of the transcripts of the tapes we did earlier this year. This is now in hand and we are expecting to receive the full £640 cost to get them published. John Dickinson is looking to put the transcripts into a publishable form and assign photographs, previously unused, to the text.

Newsletter – This was available to be distributed. Deliveries needed to be done in the middle of November or the last week in November at the outside. Ray and Sandie are covering Lbro Road normally covered by The Smiths.

Gracedieu group

This group are keen for us to host their history presentation on the priory, and we are looking towards doing this in March, and are awaiting an OK from the Gracedieu group that they can do the date we have suggested.

Our June meeting

Our June meeting will be held at Swannington Mill, at the usual time, subject to agreement from Denis Baker, and Ray Woodward is arranging for us to retire to a local hostelry afterwards. Nita is to remind Denis Baker nearer the time.

AOB

Purchase of a marquee/tent

Chris Matchett has a tent which he wishes to sell. It measures 20ft x 10ft and he paid £400 for it about 3 years ago. He wants £100 for it. It has to be supported by a bolt through one of the poles, because a lug broke off, but this was not felt to be a problem. It was felt that the cost was a little high, and we needed to establish if the tent would roll up and where would it be stored. Ray Woodward agreed to find out if the tent had sides in it which would roll up, get a photo of it, and possibly talk again about the price with the owner. Someone mentioned that B&Q sell tents, and we should make a comparison between what we were being offered and the new tents there.

Bobs Closs Cable

It was reported that there was a possibility the electricity cable currently running over Bobs Closs may be rerouted underground. Work is to be carried out on the adjacent transformer and switching installations and a request has been made to the authority responsible to improve the amenity and the safety of the area by burying the cabling. An answer is awaited

Asda

The CVS of which we are a member have alerted us to the fact that Asda wish to build a 40,000 sq ft store, with 400 car parking spaces in the centre of Coalville with foot access from High Street on the old Grieves site. There will be a display at Coalville Library as promoted in this week's Echo for people to look at. Ray Woodward mentioned that there were three sites in our area which were considered suitable for regeneration. The others are the current Ford Motors showroom on the corner of the road opposite the Council Offices, and the Forest Road garage opposite Stephenson Way roundabout. Discussion took place on

whether the provision of yet another supermarket was a good thing for Coalville's existing shops. Nita said that the group as a whole were not making any statements one way or the other about this, but individual members who felt strongly that there shouldn't be another supermarket in the town needed to go to the library and make their statements to the supermarket's representatives.

Balfour Beatty

Nita had contacted the company as they had driven over the grass verge at the Springfield corner and over the gorse bushes we had planted. A complaint made to the company generated the response that it wasn't them as they haven't been working in the area. This is despite a fleet of their vans with the complaint phone number emblazoned on the side being seen working at the time, and a conversation with the workman themselves. Nita will be talking to the highways department about this to see if they can help by delaying payment to the company unless the bushes are replaced.

Blue Plaques

NWLDC have forwarded an email from a lady at English Heritage currently carrying out a survey of plaque schemes across England, with the aim of creating a commemorative plaques network. She is contacting all local authorities, groups, societies and organisations that have, at one time or another, erected plaques (not necessarily blue) in their area and also those wanting to set up schemes. The results of the survey will help formulate guidance documents and will form the basis of a comprehensive list of plaques in England, which will hopefully be published on their website. Nita has replied with information on our plaques, and is keen to help establish a commemorative plaque network in NWL area, which has been suggested, for more blue plaques to then appear and possibly be funded.

Jumble

Geoff Walker sought permission to dispose of boxes of jumble that had failed to sell at a number of events as he saw fit. This was agreed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Dec 6th at 6.45pm at Thringstone Community Centre

This will also be our Christmas Party. Please bring the food you promised, and don't eat beforehand! Meeting will be condensed and minutes prepared beforehand and sent out/delivered.