



# The Friends of Thringstone

Chairman: Nita Pearson  
20 Springfield, Thringstone, Leicestershire, LE67 8LT  
Telephone: 01530 223434  
<mailto:nita.pearson@ntlworld.com>

Visit our website at: [www.friends-of-thringstone.org.uk](http://www.friends-of-thringstone.org.uk)

## Minutes of meeting held at Thringstone Community Centre, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 6.45pm

**Present:** Nita Pearson, Lorraine Whitehurst, Pauline Boulstridge, Anne Baxter, Ray Neal, Geoff Walker, Jim Wilkinson, Bernard Lee, Tony Newton, Ray Woodward, Ann Petty, Chris Mellor, Pam Porter, John & Karon Smith, Colin Perrett, Cllr Pam Clayfield, Colin Porcher, Jo Johnson, Margaret Smith, Jan Cufflin, Cllr. Dave Everrit, Paul Rogers (library) , PC Dwight Barker, CSO Rachel Forster and Geoff Wilson.

**Apologies** Roy Hill, Sandie Newton, Bill Newton, Neils Neilson, John Dickinson, Rowena Summers and Jane Wilson

The Chair welcomed a new committee member, Jan Cufflin. Rowena Summers resigned from the committee last weekend, and Jan has since been co-opted, as is appropriate under the terms of our Constitution.

**Treasurer's report** – Pam Porter reported that we have a healthy balance, due in part to the receipt of sponsorship monies totalling £360 relating to our Heritage Event later in the Year. The certainty of this funding will greatly assist in the planning and booking process for this event as costs such as event insurance premiums and entertainment booking deposits will have to be met. Ray Woodward is still pursuing further funding from this avenue. We are still awaiting payment of the £69 due from NWLDC for brochures. Nita has chased this.

Bal bfwd	£1961.20	
Receipts	18.00	Stanley advert
Expenditure	55.00	Plants (Bernard Lee)
	100.00	Event Insurance Premium
	34.20	Photos – Coalville Times
Bal cfwd	£1790.00	

Sponsorship monies received so far are, P&R Building Supplies £250, Quiet Storm £50, T Birchall £10 and Masons Chemists £50.

The item of expenditure detailed above £55 for plants comes from the £200 donated by Mrs Newton which leaves a balance of £145 earmarked for plants in accordance with Mrs Newton's wishes. After discussion it was agreed that these funds should be paid over to Bernard Lee so that

he will be able to maximise the value of this donation by taking advantage of special offers etc. as and when these become available.

### **Secretary's report**

Nita passed to Geoff details and the policy document for the insurance covering the Heritage Event in September.

**Web report** – John Smith reported that all was up to date and that the web-site now comes up at or near to the top of the list using popular search engines. He also reported that if you put Friends of Thringstone in inverted commas into MSN search engines, the site also comes up. John said there have been 8,000 hits on the site since we started, which is impressive.

**History report** – Ann Petty announced that information had been received showing the history of the Star Public House back to 1547.

On the question of village pubs, it appears that the Rose & Crown has now closed because the brewery are currently unable to find a licensee to run the business. It would seem that the Queens Head may suffer a similar fate in the near future, as the current tenancy is up for renewal in September. This could mean that the Community Centre would be the only watering hole in the village centre.

A meeting had taken place with the owner of the Pinfold, Jim Musson, who seemed not to be sure of the precise boundary of his holding but agreed that Ray Neal and his team could use their metal detecting equipment on the land to investigate and search. He further said that he was considering leaving the meadow to grow naturally as an exercise.

**Publications report** - Tony Newton informed the members that a further £9.50 had been received from The Community Centre being the proceeds of brochure sales. We now have another 30 Blue Plaque walk brochures which we got at a discounted rate of £1.70 per copy rather than £1.90. Nita has done a second proof read of the new publication Memories of Thringstone Part 1, and it is hoped that this will be available in the not too distant future. Someone has already indicated they want 5. It has already been agreed that 25 of these will be given without charge to Thringstone Primary School for them to use in their local history work. Nita reported that she is endeavouring to get hold of some display stands for our publications to be housed in when we are doing events.

**Councillors' 5 minutes** - Cllr Pam Clayfield announced that a meeting was held to establish a Community Forum for the villages in the Coalville area which were eligible for funding from the NWLDC 'Coalville Expenses' account. Suggestions were being sought for a suitable and appropriate name for this Forum and it was further thought that the 'Coalville Expenses' tag for these funds was perhaps unhelpful at best and misleading at worst. Cllr. Clayfield also reported that the Millbank footpath is remaining closed until the required work has been completed.

### **Topic for discussion - Shops, Facilities, Services and mobile library**

Nita passed round information to the group about the state of these facilities at the turn of the Millennium.

**Bus Service** - Despite the fact this is now 8 years on, the bus service is still felt to be expensive, as it was then. Cheap returns were offered then taken away, and to get to Coalville costs £1.60 each way. Various bus timetables have changed, and people are still unhappy with the service to Coalville. There are two services running there. One runs every 15 mins approx. Monday to Saturday and another one runs hourly Monday to Sunday, with variations. If you want to go to Leicester, you either go into Coalville or up to Whitwick. To get to Ashby, you again go to

Coalville. The only direct service from Thringstone to a major city is the 99 which goes to Nottingham, but Karon Smith reported she had used this, and found it takes 2 and a half hours to actually complete the journey. Whilst it is easy to get to the Whitwick doctors' surgeries and to the Leisure Centre, to get to Coalville hospital means a change in Coalville, and not all people in the village use the Whitwick surgery, and can then be stuck to get to their surgeries.

It was agreed that bus companies will only run a service when it is likely to make profits. It was also pointed out that potentially Leicester city centre shops could be losing out on trade from this area, because people can't get to the centre by bus.

The millennium report suggested the need for seats in bus shelters, but this has not been implemented. Nita has chased this, and it is unlikely that seats will be added. The seat on The Green is, apparently, often used by people waiting for the bus.

Ray Neal pointed out that there is no bus stop near Grace Dieu priory from Shepshed/Loughborough areas, although there is a bus stop on the other side of the road coming from the village.

**Pavements** - Footpaths and pavements continue to leave a lot to be desired. Disabled people have difficulties in certain areas as discussed before. It is also difficult when cars park on the pavement. There is a car parked just past the Meadows nursing home, on the pavement, quite a lot. This has been discussed at various meetings in the past. The Lilly Bank lane leading to the George and Dragon is very narrow and winding making it very dangerous to negotiate on foot. It was also pointed out that the bricks from what was Mrs Fretson's house on the corner of the lane are now falling into the road and making it dangerous, but it was pointed out that it is the responsibility of the owner of the field to ensure that these cause no hazard to traffic. The verges need to be trimmed back and there is a lot of litter there, but proper safety procedures will need to be in place whilst the work is in progress. Cllr Pam Clayfield undertook to discuss this with the appropriate authority.

**Library Service** - The mobile library comes to the village regularly. The report suggested that there was insufficient promotion of this service, and so people didn't know it was there to use, when it visited, or where it parked. Paul Rogers from the library advised the group on the timetable and stopping points for this service and showed various posters related to Library and Mobile Library matters. He also mentioned that there are books available for youngsters of about 3 years of age, colouring books and the opportunity to use the internet, and said that the library service can deliver books to people who are housebound, if they have details to do so. He undertook to look at the promotion and advertising of the service to include giving details to the site agents at the new build properties within the village. Nita agreed that a link would be put on the FOT website, with details of the visiting days and times.

**Shops and pubs** - The newsagents on Main Street have closed since the report was done and been replaced by another hairdressers. The Fox has now shut. There are continuing stories of poor trade at the Post Office. Ruby's continues to be as popular as ever it was, but trade at local pubs has probably gone down. As already stated, the Rose and Crown has closed until they can find someone to run it, and there are rumours that The Queens Head may close shortly. This matter was discussed at some length without however reaching any conclusion regarding a solution to the problem which it would appear is not confined to our village but also extends into far more densely populated areas and indeed towns.

**Cash** - People wanted a cash machine in the village, and there now is one at Kay's and cash is also available to card holders in the 'Link' issuers group at the Post Office. This is a free service but does of course require adequate funds to be available in the account.

**Child care issues** - Some people wanted a baby clinic, and others wanted a community car service.

Not everybody will be aware that building work on a new Children's Centre is taking place within the grounds of the primary school. This is a refurb and change to what used to be the caretaker's bungalow, just inside the school grounds. The centre will, it is hoped, provide services for the village such as parenting classes, baby weighing clinic, family link workers and health visitors. This could dramatically increase the amount of traffic in the area and also exacerbate the problems of parking on that part of Henson's Lane.

There was a great deal of discussion with regard to the parking of motor vehicles particularly in Hensons Lane around the time of delivery and collection of children from the school. The redevelopment of the former school caretaker's bungalow next to the school as a child care centre with little extra onsite parking, it was felt, would only exacerbate an already difficult situation.

The police view that it was not necessarily an offence to park on a bend or in such a way as to narrow the carriageway was not well received, but the official line is now that the local council is responsible for the enforcement of parking restrictions. It is, however, an offence if an emergency services vehicle is unable to get through.

The school are aware of the problem of parking, and are looking to implement a reward scheme for pupils who walk to school, and 'walking bus groups' are being formed by asking parents to volunteer for this duty. Pupils who live further away will be encouraged to participate on a 'Park and Stride' basis thus pushing the parking away from the school area, possibly utilising the Thringstone Members Club car park.

Dwight Barker agreed to talk to the head at the school about the issue of parking, and also to contact the Highways Department to talk about the possibility of lines to prevent parking on one side of the road, which would then free up the situation.

Where someone, however, blocks the drive of a resident of Henson's Lane, that resident is advised to contact Leicestershire Police, as this is obstruction.

**Community Centre** – there were several suggestions on how the community centre could be improved.

- They wanted to see more computer classes. The LCC organises classes and for them to run, the classes need to be full. There was a beginner's computer course advertised at the Community Centre recently.
- People wanted to be able to email and use the computer at the centre. The office is now connected to email and the internet, but nobody from the general public has ever asked to use the service. The community centre also now has its own dedicated website on which it promotes its services. It also advertises what's on on other websites quite regularly.
- People wanted a larger TV in the bar, and there now is one. The bar has also been recently refurbished with new seating, and decorated. There is also a regular film club at the centre, and other events, which FOT are helping to advertise where possible.
- People wanted more family events, and this is being addressed. They also wanted a reading room, but this is not really something that can have its own dedicated room. However, people can bring their newspapers into the house lounge in the morning.
- The community centre needs a lift. This is still being addressed, and the executive committee are looking at various options.
- People suggested that the evening classes were on too early and wanted more variety. This is an LCC decision and times cannot be altered. Various new types of classes have been offered, but due to lack of support, most haven't taken off.
- There seemed to be confusion as to when the centre was open. Given that the centre is mainly staffed by volunteers, it isn't possible to be open all the time. The Community Centre publicize the times on their website and the office is always open in a morning and at other times by appointment.
- People wanted a coffee bar on weekdays. Whilst this is a good idea, it has been tried and wasn't very well supported. To try these new ideas needs the help of volunteers.
- A youth drama group had been suggested, and one ran for a time but folded due to lack of interest.
- There seemed to be interest in a youth band and choir. The LCC Youth Service are the providers for activities for young people and have to adhere to strict regulations, so this is unlikely to happen. However, in 2007 NWLDC tried to get a music event for young people up and running at the centre for youngsters to come and play their guitars etc., and this was poorly supported.

- Many people suggested that there should be dancing classes. There used to be line dancing classes at the centre, but these moved to Thringstone Members Club. The centre has tried tea dances, but these again folded after a time.
- A village bonfire night was the final suggestion for the Community Centre to consider. Health and safety issues, however, including the wild life conservation area at Bob's Closs, have rendered this impossible.

From the Friends of Thringstone survey, people seemed to want shows, dances, bands, and other such things on at the community centre, most of which has been covered above.

The panto society have two productions a year at the centre, but people at the time of the report felt there weren't enough tickets for local people to attend. The panto society advertise in the village and elsewhere, and it is really up to people to book early if they want to go along, although not all nights are sell-outs. People had asked for a children's matinee performance, and this was put to the group at Christmas for them to discuss amongst their committee. FOT also asked that they advertise the fact within their programme that the community centre is available to hire for parties etc. and give contact details. They agreed to do this.

**Housing** – There were fears raised even then about new housing in the village, unless it related to housing for the elderly or first time buyers. This continues to be a matter of concern to residents, and in the last few years, there have been developments at Badgers Croft, a new house has gone up on John Street, and several on Henson's Lane and the bottom end of Loughborough Road.

Friends of Thringstone continue to voice their concern on matters such as this.

### From Previous Minutes

- **Grace Dieu Priory presentation** is at the Community Centre on 27<sup>th</sup> March with a 7pm start. Please support this! Nita has advertised this on websites, and also contacted The Echo to put this in the What's On. Thanks to Tony Newton, posters have been done and are up at The Post office, Ruby's and within the Community Centre.
- **Report back from Events meeting.** Minutes of the events meeting have been circulated, and most of the deliveries have been sorted. Spare copies of the minutes were available to those who wanted them. It was agreed that the membership be asked whether FOT should be represented at the Grace Dieu event, which is now on 21<sup>st</sup> June (a Saturday) and is free to enter. There is, however, a stall cost of £15, and it was agreed that we stand, selling bric a brac and other items which we need to clear. Sandie Newton, Pam Porter, Maggie Smith, Bernard Lee and Ray Neal put themselves forward to assist at this event. Nita said she would contact John Dickinson to inform him of this. Discussion took place on how members felt about paying £110 for the clown we had last year (for £50). It was agreed that this is an acceptable cost to pay out, as the clown was well received last year so £110 is a reasonable investment. The possibility of holding a History display in a marquee was mooted as it was felt that this would aid in planning the whole event. This will be discussed further.
- **Planting projects updates** Ray has continued to work on the front garden at the community centre, which is our next project. £145 is available for plants thanks to Mrs Norah Newton, and there will be an area dedicated to her son Robert within that part of the centre. The group need to agree the wording of a sign which could then be put up at the centre..
- **Balfour Beatty** Nita is still waiting for the gorse bushes promised to be planted, and has today spoken to the contractors about this. They are going to go to a nursery to buy 4 gorse bushes, and then contact Nita to discuss where they should be planted.

- **Sponsorship for Heritage Event** Ray Woodward is currently working on visiting companies to talk about sponsorship. He is also going to be contacting the NUM on sponsorship, and find out if there is a banner we can have to link with the mining part of the theme, and other mining related things.
- **Walks** No walks have as yet been undertaken, but Nita is working on this. People who wish to come along and help with the walks are wanted. It would be unfair for the whole responsibility of walks to fall onto Nita's shoulders. Ray Woodward agreed to help, and so did Sandie Newton and Roy Hill.
- **Publication of memories** As previously mentioned, we are hopeful that the new publication of Memories will be available by the end of May. NWLDC have been in touch to say that they will mention this new publication in their new Culture News, which will come out for the first time in April and cover the period April to June 08. They will put to contact the group if people wish to have these booklets.
- **Calendars** Following some confusion over the quote received from Quiet Storm, we are likely to be pursuing the issue of calendars with Charnwood Publishing. Members agreed that £370 for 100 calendars was acceptable. Nita needs photos of the village at all times of the year, and would like members who have access to high definition photographs to let her have these as soon as possible either on disc or memory stick. After discussion it was decided to proceed with the early production of calendars in a different format ie. a diary format with smaller photos coupled with space for notes and the need for these photos to be provided by the members was emphasised. Discussion took place on whether these calendars should have a link to a charity, and that charity benefit from sales, but it was agreed to have the calendars for sale at £4.50 and include within the calendars details of our sponsors, as a thanks to them for their support.
- **Parking at events** We are still looking at the problem of parking at our events, and are working on some possible solutions.
- **Engaging with young people** Nita has been trying to get in touch with people from the Youth Council with a view to getting more young members involved. This is ongoing. It was agreed that we need to encourage younger members to swell the ranks and help with some of the work currently undertaken by older members.
- **Town Twinning links** The Town Twinning Association are contacting the Town Hall in Romans Sur Isere to tell them about our group and our willingness to exchange ideas and information.
- **Whitwick HS 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary** - This event is being held at Hall Lane, Methodists, but the date has changed to 10 and 11<sup>th</sup> May (afternoon only on the Sunday). Ann Petty has agreed to have brochures on her stand on behalf of the group.
- **East Midlands Today** - Nothing further has been heard on this.
- **Blue Plaque scheme** – NWLDC, English Heritage and partner agencies are still working to formalise whether there will be a blue plaque scheme in the area. Nita is continuing to be involved in discussions.
- **Community Centre Events** Nita will continue to email people when there is something on at the community centre, but is pleased to say there was a full house for the recent Film Club show. The next film evening is 10<sup>th</sup> March when the film is Little Miss Sunshine.

- **Police Surgeries** Dwight has supplied Nita with details of police drop-ins planned for the village, and these have been circulated round the group with emails and also in paper format for those who do not have email, and have been put on the website. The main visit to The Green is on 6<sup>th</sup> April from 10am-2pm but there are other specific areas in the village being visited. Dwight reported that there had been a hidden camera in the village for 36 hours near to Kay's shop to see the speed of traffic passing through The Green onto Loughborough Road, and that the outcome was that less than 15% exceeded 35 mph. Discussion took place on the speed in the evenings, and the fact that some cars drive down the pavement, irrespective of pedestrians, to park outside Kay's shop.

#### **AOB**

- **Miner's Gala Event, Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September at Snibston Discovery** – We have been invited to attend this event, but are still looking for volunteers.
- **Remember Picnic in the Park 29 June 2008** – Volunteers are needed to man stalls and Jan Cufflin has taken on the job of putting together a rota for this, and also for the manning of the stalls at the Heritage Event. Please contact Jan if you think you can help.

#### **Date of next meetings:**

Full Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> April at Thringstone Community Centre, 6.45pm at which the topic for discussion is 'The Environment.'

Next events meeting is 24<sup>th</sup> April also at Thringstone Community Centre at 6.45pm.

All welcome to both or either.