



The Friends of Thringstone

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Minutes of meeting held at Thringstone Community Centre on Thursday 10th April 2008 at 6.45pm

Present: Nita Pearson, Pauline Bolstridge, Anne Baxter, Jim Wilkinson, Maggie Smith, Sandie and Tony Newton, Pam Porter, Lorraine Whitehurst, Cllr Dave Everitt, Ray Neal, Tracey Foulds, Ann Petty, Jan Cufflin, Janet Stevenson, Bernard Lee, Roy Hill, Chris Mellor, Claire MacRory and Geoff Wilson.

Apologies: Ray Woodward, John and Karon Smith, Rowena Summers, John Dickinson, PC Dwight Barker, Colin Perret, Geoff Walker, Jo Johnson, Colin Porcher, Julie Marrafin, Cllr Pam Clayfield, Tam Bream and Jane Wilson.

Treasurer's Report:

Pam Porter reported as follows

Bal btFwd	£1790.00	
Receipts	10.00	Haines – Event stall
	10.00	Bainbridge – Event stall
	10.00	Headz Handz – Event stall
	50.00	Style Interiors – Event sponsorship
	69.00	Brochures placed with NWLDC
	28.00	Other brochures
Expenditure	145.00	Bernard Lee – Plants
	48.00	Pukka Publishers
	65.46	NWLDC – Leaflets
	100.00	Marquee Purchase – Matchett
Bal c/Fwd	£1608.54	

Brochure donations totalling £83 have been collected, plus a £2 donation has been received. We agreed to purchase 10 plastic brochure holders to be used at events at a cost of £25.11. As a result of most of these being cash transactions, a form has been produced and will be used to detail cash transactions in future as a safeguard for those collecting cash donations.

Other groups had shown an interest in the purchase of the marquee in which we were interested, so we borrowed it, set it up to see what it looked like, and agreed to pay £100 for this. We have

however agreed to provisionally hire it out at a cost of £25 to Friends of Grace Dieu for their event on 21 June.

Sponsorship monies from WI for 1st publication are being paid to printers by WI direct.

We need to start to think what our next project will be, so that we can spend some of the money we have on the village, but we need to remember that out of the monies shown in the account at the moment, payments to entertainers will be necessary for the Heritage Event.

Projects:

Ray Neal has been planting at The Community Centre for us but more plants are needed to finish the job. This project has been funded initially by the mother of Robert Newton to commemorate the life of her son who was a local historian.

It was agreed that FOT give £100 to allow the completion of the work. This amount however should also include the purchase of a metal plaque dedicating the garden to Robert Newton.

Bernard will liaise with Pauline on this as she can source the plaque at a reasonable cost.

Ray Neal mentioned that he would like to purchase a bulk order of daffodil bulbs for next spring.

Other suggestions for future projects include improving the walkway by The Glebe and also improving Charles Booth's grave, by having it cleaned. Jan Cufflin talked to Church House to see if there is a procedure to follow to get the grave cleaned, and it appears that there is a faculty costing £50 and various other administration issues involved in this.

It was agreed that a planting project to include prickly plants such as hollies, hawthorn and mahonias down by the church wall may protect it from vandal damage and discourage the depositing of litter in the area.

It was further suggested that we look to fund skips so that the area surrounding the entrance to the Sustrans trail by the football pitch, and on Turolough road can be cleared of litter. It was suggested that we aim to do the work on the Friday of half-term in May so that Claire MacRory can involve local young people from the Scout Cadets in this work. Pam Porter will investigate the costs of skips etc and will work with Claire on this.

Secretary's report:

Geoff had nothing to report. Nita passed on to Geoff a letter from a lady attending the Heritage Event as a guest in the opening party, a press cutting advertising our first village walk and the Grace Dieu presentation which we hosted, press cuttings from The Echo on our interest in hauntings in the village, David Taylor's diary which mentions us, plus a copy of Culture and Heritage news in which our plaques are featured.

Web report – John Smith

John removed the old guest book because of spam, and replaced this with something else. He has also added an update list, so that you can see at a glance from the home page what has been recently added, and put on there a photo of Burbage Silver Band who is appearing at our Heritage Event. The craft page for September has been populated with those confirmed to date. All current minutes are on the website, and it is being kept bang up to date.

History – Ann Petty

Ann has continued to obtain information on local properties, including details from The Old Forge giving information that Duke Francesco Sforza, Duke of Segny in Italy and his granddaughter Donna Christina Sforza de Cesarini were connected with the village at the turn of the 1900s.

Further information is being received on The Star, and work is continuing to undercover more about the millbank area following a visit by Witan Archaeology on 6th April. They will be providing us with a report of what they would like to do on the site and what may be there, for us to forward onto the landowners to seek permission for further investigations.

We will of course need to be particularly careful that we have the relevant permissions and that the person or persons giving that consent have proper undisputed title to the land in question.

Ray Neal reported that he has been investigating the use of whetstones in the area.

Publications report – Tony Newton

Community Centre brochure stocks and stocks at The George at Coleorton have been replenished.

Nita has sent an invoice to Snibston Discovery Park for £18 for brochures left there for them to sell last year.

Tony has delivered copies of the new brochure to our existing suppliers.

Walks #1 = 37 Walks #2 = 27 Walks #3 = 42 B&B 1 = nil B&B 2 = 73

We now have no spare stocks of Born and Bred Part 1. This booklet has been slow in placement but is a companion to Born and Bred Part 2, of which we have 63 still in stock awaiting placement. It was agreed that we should order a further 25 Born and Bred Part 1 in order to balance the stock on B & B part2. The cost for this will be £2.90 each (£72.50 for 25).

Councillors' 5 minutes:

Cllr Dave Everitt reported that a decision had been taken to close the Market Hall in Coalville as it was no longer viable. No decision has been taken on the possibility of an alternative site outdoors such as at Memorial Square.

The matter of increased parking charges in the Pay and Display car parks in Coalville was raised. The minimum charge is now 50p even for just ten minutes and this impacts on short term use when returning Library books for example.

There have been fires in the sustrans area of Grace Dieu Woods, and trouble with youths who congregate at various locations around the village but particularly at the green areas in Springfield which gives access to the woods. A group of young people had what was termed 'A Rave' over a recent weekend which included the theft and incineration of 4 refuse bins to feed a bonfire on the mound in the centre of the planting. The police were informed of this after the event and have undertaken to step up the surveillance and to ensure that all officers who may be called upon to respond are aware of the location causing concern. Claire MacRory also made notes of the comments made.

Anne Baxter reported problems with vandalism of the electricity sub-station off Booth Road, and said she would report this to the police.

On the matter of police cover we have been made aware of the move out of our patch of Rachel Forster our CSO. We will of course be introduced to our new CSO in due course.

The lack of a proper cycle parking facility in Coalville was drawn to the attention of Cllr Everitt who agreed to investigate as it seemed incongruous to provide cycle tracks to promote 'Green transport thinking' and then not make provision for parking the machines on arrival.

Recycling 'league tables' are now being produced for the County, and although NWLDC started slowly and were third bottom of the list last year, they are now moving up the list, with a target of 42%. Recycling needs to be cost effective but penalties are now being proposed to counter the use of landfill for refuse disposal as this tends to produce over time quantities of methane gas which is a greenhouse gas. NWLDC has now formed a 'Working Party' to investigate improvements in recycling and to make recommendations to the council.

Cllr Everitt went on to stress that segregation of the recycled materials, as requested by the council, was very important in making the operation cost effective.

The cost of collecting items such as fridges and cookers was discussed.

Tony Newton wished to know where recycled items were deposited, and whether they needed to be transported a great distance, thus reducing the green footprint of collection of such items.

Cllr. Everitt agreed to find out the answer to this.

Janet Stevenson pointed out that there is a website where people can swap unwanted items.

Cllr Everitt agreed to find out the answer to the question on where domestic batteries can be recycled.

Discussion took place on the use of compost bins in the home, and it was felt this provision needed more promotion.

Claire MacRory pointed out that various household items of furniture etc. can be donated to the unit at the rear of Marlene Reid centre, who mended such things and then sold them to people who needed second hand items.

Topics For Discussion –

Comparisons 1999 to 2008

In 1999, as now, people felt that the woodlands and brook were assets and needed to be protected. As is still the case now, Grace Dieu woods and the old railway track were designated as belonging to Belton Parish. People wanted them to be part of Thringstone.

Residents in 1999 wanted to see more trees and shrubs planted and maintenance to keep things tidy. Friends of Thringstone have achieved a lot in this respect, with initial work on Drury Lane, the area by 181 Main Street, the bottom of Brook Lane, and the Millbank area all being tidied and cultivated. In addition, there are the 7 bushes planted on the verge by Springfield estate.

There has always been concern about dumping of rubbish in the woods, especially by Woodside Estate, and our last litter pick targeted this area especially. In 1999, people wanted more litter picks but it is interesting that we haven't attracted any of these people to help when we have announced litter picks taking place in the village.

People were looking forward to the Sustrans track happening in 1999, and the general opinion is that this has enhanced the area.

Walkers in the woodland wanted unobtrusive and vandal proof footpath markers, which were provided, as was a sign within the woods detailing the geology and wildlife in the area. This latter sign was burnt down some time ago, replaced, vandalised again and not replaced. There is however a similar sign still on the gate to the woods from Springfield, although there is graffiti on this which won't come off. Claire MacRory indicated that she had access to special materials for the removal of graffiti and would provide some to see if the damage could be repaired.

People wanted a new information board on The Green and got one. They also wanted a better village sign, and we now have 2 National Forest signs provided by Friends of Thringstone following funding bids.

People also wanted some traffic calming measures, and these were implemented throughout the village.

People wanted a litter warden, and we now have street scene officers.

They wanted dog mess bins where children play and by the football grounds, which is still an ongoing issue. There are however new dog fouling regulations in effect which should result in less fouling generally. Claire MacRory provided clarification on the new laws regarding dogs and dog fouling.

Larger litter bins were suggested outside pubs, by the bus stop and at Ruby's, which were supplied. They also wanted to see regular skips appear on the housing estates and a once a year amnesty for rubbish with a skip on The Green, but this has not happened and is possibly not the way forward anyway.

People requested more education for children on the impact of dropping litter etc., and this has been tackled by the subsequent introduction of citizenship sessions at schools.

The mention of a best kept village is interesting, as this is something FOT proposed some time back, but was put on the back-burner. Following further discussion it was felt that we were not yet ready not participate in competitions of this type but agreed in principle that they were a useful part of the education and environmental improvement progress which we were formed to promote.

From Previous Minutes

Blue Plaques

NWLDC's Heritage and Culture News, a new quarterly publication, contains details of Thringstone's blue plaque scheme, and also of the grant scheme in operation. The Council would like to see other organisations considering blue plaques, and have given their details for that approach. We had hoped they would include details of our new publication, but space prevented this in their first edition.

Whilst nothing as yet has been heard about the proposed new regional blue plaque scheme, Nita has contacted Punch Taverns about the possibility of putting up another blue plaque. Information has come to light about Samuel Taylor Coleridge stopping at a pub named as The Queen's Head, Thringstone on Saturday 27th December 1806 en route to stop with the Wordsworth family who were renting, for the winter period, a farm on the Beaumont Estate at Coleorton Hall. This was recorded in his diaries, although it is not sure that this is the same building at the present Queen's Head, as Smith's map of 1807 shows no properties where the current pub stands. However, we can work on the wording for this, and it could attract tourists and thus help keep one of the village pubs open. It is a possibility that Coleridge got the name of the pub wrong, and it refers to The Bull's Head, as we know this was on the Smith maps and was open in 1806.

Other blue plaque requests have been received, to include The Three Tuns and Lilybank Farm and the Barn adjacent. The people at The Old Forge would like a reworded plaque to announce that the toll house used to be within their curtilage, but we have told them this is unlikely to happen.

Grace Dieu Priory Presentation 27th March.

The presentation was widely publicised, including editorials and listings in the local media and posters around the village. 31 people attended, of which 11 were members of FOT. Those present enjoyed a thoroughly well-researched and professional presentation by members of Friends of Grace Dieu Priory. Congratulations to Friends of Grace Dieu on their presentation.

Events

We are continuing to work on the Heritage Event. We now have a couple of members of John Albert Gee's family coming along to the opening ceremony as guests, MP David Taylor has agreed to open the event, and we have written to a number of artists and stall-holders to confirm their attendance, and have asked stall holders to pay in advance.

We are planning to have the heritage displays in the marquee, we will have pony rides, an old fire engine, fairground organ, icecream man, Carillon Radio, bouncy castle, children's and adult magician, Burbage Silver Band will be playing 2 slots, and we are working on more links with mining. Alison Clague from Snibston Discovery Park is letting us borrow one of their guides for an hour and a half for the opening. This guide will be dressed in mining gear. We are also hopeful that we will be able to borrow a film on mining in the area to show to interested parties.

The local vicar from St Andrew's will offer a short prayer as part of the opening ceremony, to allow people who have lost members of their families in mining accidents the opportunity for reflection. Jan Cufflin will inform him to be on site for 9.45am on the day.

Following discussions with amongst the committee regarding lack of entertainment inside at the Heritage Event, we have agreed to pay our children's entertainer, who is also a member of the Magic Circle, an extra £90 to stay for the full period of the event and entertain the adults within the community centre as part of a walk-about magic act.

Pauline Walker has agreed to produce a table cloth for the FOT stall.

Jan Cufflin is dealing with the rota for both Picnic in the Parks and the Heritage Event. Please contact her direct if you can help.

Nita is helping sort the rota for the Grace Dieu event.

We still need people to donate plants for Picnic in the Parks. Please contact our events team if you are going to be donating plants, so that we can co-ordinate what we have available for sale.

Balfour Beatty

Replacement of the damaged plants on the verge by Springfield has now taken place. We were provided with 2 Broom Cytisus Windlesham Ruby which flowers in early summer and provides ruby-red blooms and grows to 5ft by 5ft and 2 Broom Cytisus Boskoop Ruby, which also flowers early summer and grows to 4ft by 4ft. These have been planted in an alternating fashion, so there aren't two 5 ft plants side by side. Many thanks go to Balfour Beatty for replacing these plants for our group, following their work nearby last year which demolished part of our existing planting plan.

Sponsorship

Ray Woodward is continuing to work on attracting sponsorship, and we have received £50 from Ablutions. Ray is hopeful of also attracting funding via John Lewis group/Mercury and continues to work on trying to provide some help from the NUM for our Heritage Event in September.

Walks

Our first blue plaque guided walk took place on Sunday 30th March and attracted a family of 3 from the village and a gentleman from Groby who is heavily involved in industrial history research in Leicestershire and who wishes to be involved in any work done on the Millbank area.

Other walks arranged are detailed on the website and in our flyers, but are: 20th April at 2pm from The Green – blue plaque, 4th May at 2pm from The Green - bluebell walk through the woods to include our Grace Dieu booklet no 2, 26th May at 2pm from The Green - Cademan and Swannymote using our walk guide no. 3, 27th July at 2pm from The Green – blue plaque walk, 17th August at 2pm from The Green – Grace Dieu booklet no. 2, 21st September at 2pm from The Green – Cademan and Swannymote using walk guide no. 3.

Nita has sent details of all these walks to The Echo, and to various websites. Janet Slattery has agreed to detail these walks in her Mercury reports, and NWLDC have agreed to list the later walks in their Active Together brochure being published in June as well as their next edition of Culture News also coming out in June. Nita has advised the editor of The Vision of these walks, and intends to also publicise the Heritage Event through the same publication later in the year. Walks posters have been put up in the Community Centre, The Post Office and Ruby's. Janet Stevenson has agreed to promote to the WI, art group and bell ringers' groups with which she is associated, and all members with computers have been sent details of the walks direct by email.

Publication of memories

The first part of a two part series of booklets is now available. Of these, 25 are being donated to Thringstone Primary School for their local history projects. We hope to be able to have a photo shoot as part of the presentation of the booklets, and the headmistress, Chair of the WI and Chair of the School Governors will hopefully be involved in this.

We will have stocks of this publication available at meetings.

As we need to make sure we can continue to supply booklets, and can afford reprints, we will ask for donations from people interested in having a copy of the new booklet, as we have with other publications.

Nita has proof reading Part 2 of the Memories and is awaiting another copy to check.

Calendars

John Smith is taking over sorting photos for the calendar, but we are still in need of seasonal photos of the village and surrounding woodland please, which must be high-definition and on disc or memory stick. Once a good supply of photographs has been received, we can talk about which ones we use. All this has to be supplied to Charnwood Publishers by the end of June!

East Midlands Today

Brady Haran from BBC East Midlands Today met with Nita on the afternoon of 27th March and filmed all the blue plaques. The edited version was shown on 8th April. Brady supplied us with a link to the BBC website on which the finished film will be available, so that we can link our site to it, allowing people to view it from all over the world, should they wish.

Parking on Henson's Lane

The Police have contacted the Highways Authority about the problems with parking at school picking up and dropping off times. They have also spoken to the school to encourage the development of walking plans with children and parents.

Miner's Gala Event

We have been invited along to the event on Saturday 20th September. Volunteers were sought to man this event and came forward it was therefore agreed that we should have a presence at this event to publicise our work and promote our publications. It was agreed that Tony, Sandie, Ann and Ray would man this stall. Nita will ask Alison Clague for exact times etc.

AOB

History link site

Nita has contacted David Brown from the local history link website (www.localhistorylink.com) which links with Leicestershire County Council's site to ask if FOT can be listed as being involved in local history. She is awaiting a reply.

Nationwide Community and Heritage Awards 2008

Friends of Thringstone have been nominated for an award as part of this scheme and received a certificate to promote the nomination. The regional winners, who receive a small monetary award, will be announced on www.nationwide.co.uk and in the local press by the end of July 2008. It has been an honour to be nominated and we understand that, even if we don't win anything in the regional section, all nominees will receive a certificate confirming that they were nominated.

Film Club

The last film club was the first part of Elizabeth, and the next showing on 14th April will be the second part, which will start at 7.30pm. All welcome.

Cajun Music Evening

The Community Centre is hosting an evening of Cajun and Zydeco music from Elvis Fontenot and The Sugar Bees on 26th April at 7.30pm. Tickets are on sale at £8 to include supper.

Ghost walks

Various discussions have taken place about providing a ghost walk around the village. These are very popular, and could be potentially lucrative as fund-raisers, and as a result an article sent to The Echo made the front page. We already know about Amy at The Community Centre, a ghost at The Chapel Fitness Centre, 10 at the George and Dragon, several from an overturned carriage down Brook Lane, and are looking for information from residents on other paranormal within the village to turn this into a walk with the help and co-operation from FOGD who would then cover Grace Dieu Priory ruins. In an ideal world, it would be nice to hold the walk around 22nd June which is connected with the summer solstice in some way.

June AGM

Our AGM will be held on Thursday 5th June, and will take place at Swannington Mill. We will be shown round the mill itself as a private party, and then adjourn to The George and Dragon for a pre-ordered buffet meal, at which we will vote in our new committee, and, as was the case at Christmas, pre-prepared update minutes will be circulated. We would remind all members that subs are due at that meeting. Those people who can't attend can pay their subs in May if they wish to. Ray Woodward has organised the meal and Sandie is taking numbers (people will be required for pay £3.50). We need to know as soon as possible if people are going to the meal, and they also need to pay us their monies.

Newsletters

The May/June newsletter is ready, and needs delivery in May. We would like to thank people who continue to volunteer to deliver newsletters, and hope that we can continue to call upon them to deliver the next newsletter.

Thringstone Scouts

Thringstone scouts are now offering a car cleaning service from their premises next to The Community Centre the first Saturday of every month. They guarantee a quality service with professional equipment. Give it a try and support the local scouts.

Glenfield Hospital Fund Raiser

Nita announced details of an open morning/plant sale fund raiser for Glenfield Cardiology unit on Friday 25th April from 10am. Nita had 10 tickets to sell for this, and also for the afternoon tea party.

Next meeting: Next full meeting is 8th May. Topic for discussion is community centre and school
Next event meeting is 24th April.