

Allington Hill Volunteers Annual General Meeting

Friday 1 March 2013

Present: Cathy Harvey (Chair), Sal Robinson (Treasurer), Paul Bowditch and Irwin Beer and approx 45 members of the public.

Cathy Harvey welcomed everyone to the Annual Meeting. She said that there would be a brief formal meeting while the kettle boiled and then everyone can tuck into the tea and cake and hold the raffle draw. She hoped they would stay for the talk about Allington Hill medieval to modern.

1. Apologies received.

Anne-Marie Beer, Deanne Trott, Kevin Payne, Christine Bell, David Hutchins, Sarah Worner.

2. Review of the events over the last year.

Cathy Harvey gave her report, as follows:

Annual review. Please look through the scrapbook to bring back those happy memories.

January: Cutting the pathways through Coopers Wood, installing the arbor.

February: A committee was formed to firstly allow us to apply for grants and hopefully allow the group to run a little more smoothly.

March: Jubilee Wood. Over 70 local people came to plant 106 trees; a blessing by Peter Edwards was given. It must have helped as some of the trees grew a staggering 5 ft in their first year. Jane Dibden and Paul Bowditch planted the Royal Oak.

April: The fall of the Grandparent tree. It may be down but it's not out. The tree survives and is sending out strong shoots. Again the love for the hill shone through, and at an elderly lady's request, I scrambled down to the tree and place my hand on it and told it "it was loved". She felt it was so important that it knew that. Sadly I still go and give it a pat every now and again to let it know it is not forgotten.

June: Jubilee Festival and Beacon. Oh, did we have fun! Sometimes I am quite glad that the Trust manager is not around to see the antics of the hillbillies and the local community. We must have had every pallet from the Bridport area on top of that hill and the farmers involved took on the challenge with relish. Although it took an age to get alight, when it did burn it lit up the night sky. Another hillbilly success story.

August: Start work on wild flower meadow. With the guidance from our friendly Dorset Wildlife Trust expert we set about preparing the ground for a wild flower meadow and sowing yellow rattle seed kindly donated by them.

September: Autumn Festival. Another great gathering which brought the community together. As usual, I got into a little bit of trouble encouraging the children to get muddy making seed bombs. The children loved it though.

December: Christmas Tree Festival and Wishing Arbor. Hanging the decorations on the trees I suddenly thought that it would be worth hanging the decorations in the Arbor in Coopers Wood. And so the Wishing Arbor was born. A simple idea that again the local community has taken to heart.

Other high lights

The hill benefited from donations of two more benches and naughty pixie George did some DIY with two wooden pallets that should have been destined for the beacon. He made something to sit on and watch over the Jubilee trees. The path signs have giving people some sense of direction, although sadly the donation of way mark posts from a family in memory of their father has not been such a success. We do realize that not all the things we have done suits all, but they have been chosen by different parts of the community who have different needs, to allow them to get as much enjoyment out of the hill as possible.

We have welcomed many more supporters to our newsletter and followers on Facebook. We were also chosen as one of the main groups supported by the Mayor, Cllr Dave Rickard.

The enthusiasm of the volunteers at times is exhausting, overwhelming and with their encouragement I have learnt to beg, borrow and plead for everything from tea bags to marquees and B.B.Q.'s as well as help. It does

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amaze me that not once has anyone within the community of Bridport said no. They wish to be actively involved in looking after the hill which people hold dear to their hearts.

It was not a quiet year and I must thank everyone for their support, from editing newsletters, making cakes, picking up litter and dog poo, donating everything from rope and scramble nets, to boxes of tea. Volunteering or supporting the volunteer group, does not mean you have to wield an axe or chop trees. I also must thank everyone who has rolled up their sleeves and joined us on our working parties.

I must not forget to mention the long suffering Woodland Trust manager Jonathan Burgess, whose idea it was to set up the volunteer group in the first place. Sadly he had not done his research on how strongly us folk care about the hill and our determination to succeed where others would have fallen by the wayside. We do appreciate that we have contributed to a lot of his grey hairs and that trying to balance our wishes, his beliefs of what is right for the hill and the wishes of the Trust have not been easy, and on one occasion the Allington Hill Volunteer Group left him in serious hot water. But hopefully the Trust will fully take on what the general public expect from the Trust and not burry their heads in the sand.

We want to continue to work with the Trust, not against them. So I hope they will listen more closely to their site manager, volunteers and the public in general and care for the hill and allow the manager to provide the same standard of care and workmanship the volunteers provide.

The year ahead I fear will not be an easy one, but if we continue to work as a team, we will be able to protect and look after the hill that we all love so much.

I am now going to hand you over to the most important person on the committee, Sal who looks after the money. I'm not sure who is more dedicated to their job, Sal in her counting house or Paul on his mower. But these are the most hard working, dedicated people within the group and must be applauded for their hard work.

3. Treasurers report.

Sal Robinson gave a brief overview of the Summary of Accounts for 2012 – attached.

4. Acceptance of accounts.

The Accounts were accepted by those at the meeting, by a show of hands.

5. Election of Committee Members.

The following people had put themselves forward for election to the Committee:

Cathy Harvey, Sal Robinson, Paul Bowditch, Irwin Beer, Anne-Marie Beer, Chris Toombs, Deanne Trott, Kevin Trott, Claire Edwards.

They were elected en-bloc by a show of hands.

Adam Sheering had asked to be on the Committee and everyone agreed that this should happen when he is 18 in April.

The following positions on the Committee were filled:

Chair - Cathy Harvey – proposed by Sal, seconded by Paul, agreed.

Secretary - Anne-Marie Beer – proposed by Cathy, seconded by Irwin, agreed.

Treasurer - Sal Robinson – proposed by Cathy, seconded by John, agreed.

Committee members for other positions will be agreed upon and filled by the Committee as and when necessary.

6. Questions or comments from the floor.

Q. What events are planned for this year?

A. Summer Festival – 22 June – ideas please!

Autumn Festival – 28 September.

Someone suggested "Proms in the Park" for the Autumn Festival.

The meeting was followed by tea, coffee and homemade cakes and the Raffle was drawn.

Cathy then gave her talk on Allington Hill "Medieval to Modern", ably assisted by Chris Toombs on the projector!

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Accounts Summary for 2012.

INCOME

BALANCE BOUGHT FORWARD	£423.76
GRANTS FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT	£2,450.00
WDDC GRANT FOR JUBILEE CELEBRATION	£200.00
GENERAL DONATIONS	£144.69
PLAY AREA DONATIONS	£890.63
STEP & PATH MAINTENANCE DONATIONS	£35.00
JUBILEE TREE SPONSORSHIP	£75.50
REIMBURSEMENT FROM WOODLAND TRUST (FOR EQUIPMENT)	£64.95
EVENTS / SAL OF CALENDARS	£1,166.80

TOTAL INCOME

£5,451.33

EXPENDITURE

TOOLS / EQUIPMENT / DIESEL	£155.42
POSTAGE	£10.10
MATERIALS / EQUIPMENT FOR EVENTS	£775.35
STATIONARY / PRINTING	£154.80
SIGNS AND TRAIL MARKERS	£279.59

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

£1,375.26

BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2012

£4,076.07

Less money allocated to Play Trail

-£3,690.63

Actual money available as at 31 December 2012

£385.44

JUBILEE EVENTS

Jubilee Picnic, Activities and Sports Event

Takings	£461.12
less expenses	-£311.51
Plus WDDC Grant	£200.00

Profit **£349.61**

Jubilee Beacon

Takings	£138.33
less expenses (Glow Sticks)	-£41.72

Profit **£96.61**

Total profit from Jubilee Events **£446.22**

AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Takings	£603.08
less expenses (Glow Sticks)	-£334.31

Profit **£268.77**

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PLAY AREA MONEY

Grants received	Bridport Area Community Fund	£1,200.00
	Allington PC	£500.00
	Bridport Town Council	£500.00
	Bridport Lions	£250.00
Donations	Various	£890.63
Our own Funds	From Jubilee events	£350.00
	Total at 31 December 2013	£3,690.63
Grant awarded but not yet received as at 31 Dec 2012	West Dorset Leisure Development Fund	£1,327.00
	Anticipated final total	£5,017.63
Cost of equipment		£3,838.00
	Money available for further equipment	£1,179.63