

MINUTE OF THE 3rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,  
of the Friends of the Hermitage and Blackford Hill,  
held at the Cluny Centre, Cluny Drive, Morningside  
on Thursday October 25th 2001 at 7.30 pm.

1. The meeting was opened by David Hadley, Convener of the Friends, who thanked thirty-nine members for attending despite unpredictable and inclement weather. Those present included Cllrs Sleight, Walls, and Pringle, as well as Fergus Cook, Countryside Ranger. There were 20 apologies (listed over). A sum of £165 was taken at the door in subscriptions and donations. £82.50 had been received by the Secretary from many of those members unable to attend the AGM.

2. David then handed over to Vice-convener Jeff Maguire who explained that the members were being asked to break into five groups in order to stimulate discussion about what activities the group should organise in the coming year. [See attached note, minuted by Amanda Ingram].

3. After a break for refreshments, Fergus briefed on “The year at Hermitage”. He advised that a number of reports had been produced in the last year, detailing sparrow hawks at Hermitage (1 pair), epiphytes (mosses), common bird censuses (which were on-going and where Fergus could always use qualified assistants from the Friends), waterfowl at Blackford, and lichens. 175 oaks had been planted, plus 20 new trees at the Pond, a site which Fergus was aware had something of an air of neglect, a matter the Rangers were attending to when staff time allowed. He showed a chart of planned tree work timetabled for 6 weeks full-time work, and which would require contractors to help complete before Spring. Fergus appealed to those present to discuss dog-owners’ carelessness about excrement. He was planning to use chemicals to remove graffiti at Blackford quarry.

Fergus was thanked for this detailed insight into the demands of the Ranger’s work.

4. AGM. Annual business meeting.

Apologies taken as read (see below).

Minutes of the last AGM accepted without discussion (moved Rob Elton/2nd Rosemary Davidson).

Annual Report accepted after meeting heard that there was a typing error on p2. In para beginning “The claim by the would-be developer...”, the first and third references to the Department of Recreation should have been made to the Department of Planning. Grant Fortune enquired if

members were now to be given completed copies of the Constitution (as promised in AR), and it was explained that these would be posted/distributed to all members as soon as possible.

Accounts 2000-1 moved by Jeff Maguire/2nd Amanda Ingram.

Election of office-bearers: David Hadley explained that he had to stand down because of business commitments. The only nomination for Convener was Rob Elton (nom. Jeff Maguire/2nd David Hadley). Rob was elected Convener unanimously. He asked David to complete meeting.

Vice-Convener: Jeff Maguire re-elected unanimously (AJM/DH).

Secretary: A.J. (Sandy) Mullay (DH).

Treasurer: Susanna Dunbar (David Hadley/Cllr M. Pringle).

Standing down from committee: Wilma Elton and Lee Gates. Both were thanked for their service over the last year. Alex Brearley was presumed resigned as he had not attended meetings since March or answered correspondence.

New committee members: Ian Wotherspoon (AJM/SD). David Hadley agreed to stay on committee, and final place left open meantime.

Appointment of auditor: after discussion it was suggested by Secretary, supported by Cllr Pringle, that a £75 auditor's fee was perhaps excessive for a group with comparatively low turnover. Two assessors were appointed for 2001-2: Cllr J.L. Walls and Cllr M. Pringle. These gentlemen were thanked for undertaking this commitment.

AOB: Wilma Elton queried whether subscription would stay the same. Meeting appeared to have no desire to change from present level.

Braid Burn Flood study: this was being discussed by committee, who were hoping to invite consultant to come to Friends' meeting to explain a study which is difficult to interpret, particularly the maps.

Susanna Dunbar appealed for volunteers to distribute FoH circulars without incurring postage, and reminded members about the sweatshirt offer.

Meeting closed at 9.20 pm, with David again thanking everyone for their attendance, followed by Rob Elton carrying a brief vote of thanks to David for his year's service as Convener.

Apologies received from: Deb Allen, Neil Young, Lee Gates, Cllr Mackintosh, Carol Houston, Judith Cantley, David Land, Rupert Forbes, David Burnett, Dorothy Harrower, J.A. Colthart, Christian Thin, Mr & Mrs Weston, Mr & Mrs Tod, Lindsay Killey, Jill Gregory, Heather Thomson, Ian Wotherspoon, Margaret Nisbet, Tom KIELTY.