

Friends of Starbank Park

Committee Meeting

7.30 pm, Monday, 24th August, Starbank Inn

Minutes

Present

Alastair Robertson (Chair)
Janet McArthur (Secretary)
Sandy Logan
Stan Dunlop
Liz Nicholson

1. *Apologies* were received from Vikki Floyd and Graham Buckley.
2. *Design for Star for 125 anniversary*

Sandy passed round a note of the meeting with David Dorward, Julie Milne, Sandy Logan and Liz Nicholson held on 5th August. David is in charge of the floral displays at the floral clock in Princes Street Gardens. The note of the meeting is attached. The note was accepted as an excellent basis for moving ahead. Briefly, the note outlined the preparation including tools required (dibbers and clippers) and the ground preparation needed (the ground needs to be flat and compressed, the soil level needs to be approximately 25mm below the grass level – soil may need to be imported. Dwarf, succulent plants would be best. We agreed, for the star, a silver background of *Antennaria Dioica* and points and lettering of *Senecio Serpens* (blue) would be best. *Pyrethrum Golden Moss* (yellow) would be used in the crescents. Larger plants would be possible but these may require more maintenance to maintain the display clarity. Plants need to be ordered by early October at the latest. Ritchie Fraser is on leave for 2 weeks from 14th September.

Actions:

- a. **Alastair** to write to Ritchie Fraser by 28th August, outlining what we are hoping to do and giving a rough indication of the numbers of plants likely to be needed.
- b. **Alastair** to include a quick literature search in the above e-mail regarding the toxicity of *Senecio Serpens* and inform Ritchie and ask him for advice regarding their suitability for park use.
- c. **Sandy** to check measurements of the star and crescents and calculate the numbers of plants needed by 28th August. It is assumed that plug plants will be planted close together.
- d. **Janet** to write to Ritchie Fraser with the calculated number of plants required for the star and the crescent.

- e. We will request some sort of barrier around the star and crescents during and immediately after planting.

Sandy will construct tools, mainly dibbers, before the plants arrive and will purchase 4 pairs of fine work secateurs (@ <£3 each) from Lidl and ask Graham for re-imbusement.

It is anticipated that Julie and her team will do most of the ground preparation and the planting. The Friends will assist as required.

3. *Events:*

- a. There will be no formal autumn event.
- b. It was agreed to hold Halloween and Christmas events. **Janet** will write a few lines about the Halloween event so **Alastair** can seek permission from the Council in mid-September. It was agreed that there was no particular need for Alastair to dress up to look scary.
- c. Neil Forest had suggested that a spring event associated with cherry blossom would be a good idea. This excellent idea was agreed unanimously. The theme and details will be worked out over the next few months.
- d. The Green Flag announcement on 23 July went well and received coverage in the Evening News, the Herald and on STV News.
- e. The wine and cheese party was a success. The cost of £85 was matched by new membership fees and donations for plants.

4. *Minutes and Actions:* There no comments on the draft minutes for the meeting of 20th July. All actions relating to the wine and cheese were completed. Progress is being made regarding the cold frame. The work on the Park history is progressing. Gordon Hay is supplying Janet with new historical information. Discussions on the bothy were deferred, **Alastair** is meeting Alan Brown regarding possible developments on 25th August. Alastair has spoken to Ritchie Fraser regarding the purchase and use by the Friends of a battery powered strimmer to cut the grass beside the star and under the railings. A detailed risk assessment would be necessary, protective clothing would need to be worn but it would be unlikely that any administrative issues would block the use of the strimmer. The next step is to raise the issue at our next regular meeting with Ritchie, Jen and Julie in October. This initiative may be blocked if Julie is against it.

5. *AOB:*

- a. Trinity Gala: We will use the folding table as the main support of the display. **Alastair** will print 50 copies of the newsletter, 10 old photos of the park, 10 from 2013 and 10 current pictures. **Janet, Alastair** and **Stan** will be the main people manning the stand.
- b. **Alastair** will write to Duncan Bremner regarding possible initiatives in the park this autumn.
- c. **Alastair** will write to Laura Thomson regarding the nature trail. **Janet** will also speak to Laura.

- d. We will invite Andrew Morton to the flag raising ceremony at the park (**Alastair**) and we'll offer to help in his garden, if he wants. We will also keep him informed of the progress in the park.
6. *Next Meeting:* Monday, 12th October, 7.30. Starbank Inn

AR
25th August 2015

Annex 1
STARBANK PARK – STAR & CRESCENT
125th ANNIVERSARY 2016

PROPOSAL FOR PLANTING & DISPLAY

On Wed. 5 August, Liz & Sandy met David Dorward to discuss our outline thoughts on the above proposal. These included colour scheme, feasibility, suitable plants, technical aspects, practical aspects of layout & techniques and maintenance. We also spent some time looking at the merits of various types of plant with respect to size, density & colour etc.

David was very enthusiastic about our ideas and thought that the design would bring an appropriately Victorian feel to the park in the anniversary year. His input is invaluable in terms of ground preparation, tools for the job, template positioning, planting organisation/quantities & maintenance. He also appeared chuffed that a Friends Group is prepared take on a classic display of this type. We got the impression that this was a first!

However...we do have a considerable amount to think about in terms of planning for a display that is a challenging project and we list below in bullet form a list of key areas of consideration which is NOT likely to prove exhaustive as we proceed!

- Plants chosen to be ordered by end Sept./start Oct. latest.
- Julie's team to lead preparation/planting. Our team will assist/labour/input "as required". Attention to detail is essential. To discuss.
- David brought some special tools that his team uses. These are not difficult to design and make from basic materials and we'll take this on board.
- Ditto for templates required for the centre-piece 125.
- An accurate scale plan will be prepared by us which will ensure accurate layout by the team.
- We have to decide on the types of plants to be ordered. The committee needs to discuss the merits of larger plants/lower numbers required versus small plants/great density of colour, but huge numbers required! Liz & I will discuss this with the committee on 24 Aug. Irrespective of choice a tight maintenance plan will be necessary.
- Suitable plants suggested; Dwarf plants – Senecio Serpens (blue), Antennaria Dioica (silver), Pyrethrum Golden Moss (cresc.). Larger plants – Ageratums (silver & blue), Cineraria (silver). Appropriate suggestions welcome!

To paraphrase Churchill - We hope that this is the end of the beginning!!

Look forward to getting the project off the ground.

Liz & Sandy