

## Jersey Trees for Life

### **Minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting of Jersey Trees for Life, held at Les Charrières Country Hotel, St Peter, on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2013.**

Chairman - Mr. Jon Dyson presided over the meeting, which was attended by 21 members

#### **APOLOGIES:**

Ian and Gloria Smith, Melba Matthews, Mrs J and Miss C Briggs, Bob Le Sueur, Bob and Sue Kerley, Mr and Mrs Ayles, Celia Jeune, Stella Henley, Stephen and Miriam Higginson, Michael and Marion Munz-Jones, Mary Billot, Peter Townend, Margaret Stievenard, Gloria Warner, Stephanie Berni, Ansell Hawkins, Sally Fillieul, Inga Dupre, Richard Robins.

#### **1. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held at the Le Hocq Inn were taken as read by the members present as a true representation of that meeting. Proposed by Mrs Susie Robins and seconded by Mr. Michael Dupre.

#### **2. Matters arising.**

There were no matters arising.

#### **3. Chairman's annual report.**

The Chairman then presented his report:

“Good Evening to you all, since taking over as Chair in August 2012, I have been delighted with the effort and work from the staff and committee and would like to thank them all for helping me this year.

As you are probably aware I'm not a natural public speaker so I will make this brief and then pass over the mantle to Conrad and Michel who can provide more specific details in their respective fields.

#### Achievements/Social Events

We celebrated our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary last October, with honoured guests The Lieutenant Governor and Lady McColl, Sir Tim Smit and the Chairman from the Guernsey Men of the Trees, Mr Lloyd, where Sir Tim gave an interesting talk on his ethos to Life, which was an eye opener.

We held our Christmas lunch in December, obviously, at the Trinity Arms with a walk beforehand in the Mont Pellier Gardens.

In January we held a morning workshop with a Macaroon and Soup kitchen, to discuss ideas and aid in formulating a future plan for the Val de la Mare Forgotten Forest. Since then all the members who gave me their e-mail addresses have been contacted and met, we have devised a plan for the forthcoming year, and are currently working on years two and three.

There have also been several organised walks around the Arboretum.

Upcoming are a garden visit to Cap Verde in St. Lawrence, and a long awaited trip to Westonbirt Arboretum, which will include three other parkland visits. Following clearance work in the Birch zone of the Forgotten Forest we intend hosting a Teddy Bear Picnic towards the end of the summer, whenever that happens!!!

We are also in the early stages of organising a celebration for the tenth anniversary of Adelina Wood for next year.

#### Planting & Trees

Our main emphasis this year has been consolidation and maintenance. Conrad and his team have visited the hedgerows we have planted over the past few years and carried out gap filling, to ensure the hedges are healthy and continuous for the migration of wildlife around the island as they were intended.

We have also carried out a further tranche of hedgerow planting in Grouville under the CES grant scheme, plus private planting schemes, totalling some 6,624 whips and trees.

Our main commitment over the past year has been clearing and maintenance work at the Forgotten Forest Arboretum. We have had various work and school parties helping out, and a Volunteer Ben Mission, has been looking after Work Wise groups throughout the year, and we thank him.

We are grateful for the visit of Dr. Owen Johnson in May who helped with the identification of the trees, but even he was flummoxed on 12 specimens. Conrad will send him further foliage and seed samples to aid with the identification, so we should have a complete list soon. The poor identification detail we inherited has caused us delays in installing labels and signage. Unfortunately we had quite severe losses in the heavy snow as reported in the news, and we are currently looking for specimens to replace these or similar species more suitable to the conditions of the valley.

Other works over the past year included the continued maintenance of Adelina Wood and our Alder collection, as well as other lands we have planted in the past few years.

We helped with a commemorative tree planting at the Radisson Blu Hotel for their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, and they are supporting us with a discretionary added room tariff and providing work groups for the Jersey Hedgerow Campaign.

Conrad and Don have recently been joined by a third staff member, Robin Hart, who is enthusiastic and will provide valuable additional labour.

### Ash Dieback

Apart from the few specimens found at the end of last year which were destroyed no other findings have been reported. Now the trees are in full leaf it's time to inspect again, and if any of you suspect any specimens are looking poor, please contact Conrad or the Environment team immediately.

### Education

Michel has continued his work with Education, but with the roll-out of 'Forest School activities' across primary schools and the demise of School Environment Week, his workload in this area has reduced. However he has continued to conduct walks and given lectures and talks to various schools, scouts, church, garden, and other social groups. But don't worry, we've kept him busy with administration and other projects such as the new improved Trees website, and we must extend our thanks to Gerard Farnham for all his freely given help with this.

Unfortunately Michel will be leaving us shortly, taking up a position at a school in the UK, however don't be disappointed, he will be frequently returning to the Island and will still continue with the Newsletter and Education workshops. He will be handing over the administration work to Helen Pulley, who will be working part time.

### Donations, sponsorship, Funding and Volunteers

I won't bore you with the extensive list, which is published within the pages of our newsletter, but I would like to pass on our sincere thanks to all those who have contributed over the past year to our charity organisation, whether financially or in time. Specifically I would like to thank those groups who have continued to help on the Forgotten Forest Project.

I would also like to thank Peter Beamish, our Honorary Treasurer who is retiring tonight, but has managed the various funds impeccably, but it is probably best to leave him to explain the vagaries of accounting.

### To the Best Bit, Our Plans for the forthcoming Year

As well as the social events mentioned earlier, as a tantaliser, this year's ideas and aims are concentrated into four main points:

#### Planting

Given this year's consolidation and maintenance we are looking at a really BIG planting drive for the forthcoming season.

Conrad is busy surveying prospective fields to continue the Jersey Hedgerow Campaign.

We are in discussions to extend a woodland in Le Mourier valley that we planted some years ago, as part of the 'Birds on the Edge' initiative.

Negotiations are advancing for a Memorial Woodland scheme, within lands adjoining Adelina wood.

#### Awareness

New signs have been produced for the hedgerow campaign and these will be displayed where we are planting for public awareness.

A class from Jersey College for Girls will be carrying out a project in the autumn for signage and information boards at the Alder Collection.

We are in talks with the Environment Department and Societe Jersiaise to build a publicly accessible map-based data record, which will show and record our National and local Champion trees, previous planting schemes, as well as the Environment department's protected trees.

Susie is currently interviewing interested students to update our current computer register of National and local Champions in readiness for this work.

### Fundraising and Membership Drive

Sally has been tasked with the job of Membership Secretary, and she is currently working through ideas trying to generate new younger members, excusing those present, but most of our members are of the later generation, and quite frankly dyeing off, so we need to entice younger members to our Association. Philip Le Brocq has been leading Fundraising discussions, which will come to fruition later this year.

### Val de La Mare Arboretum

This year's plan has been completed and once agreed by the Committee, will be hosted on the website.

The main points and aims for this year are:

- Replace the lost trees from the spring snows as mentioned.
- Complete the identification, survey work and signage.
- Continue the access tracks into the Japanese and Pine zones.
- Cut a new radial path into the Birch section.
- Conduct an under-storey survey of flora and fauna, and collate information from other wildlife groups within zones and beyond to our licence boundaries, to provide background information for identifying future new zone areas. Anne Haden is organising this for us.
- Concentrate works in the Birch section to identify new species for the upper valley section.

### Finally

I would again like to thank all my Committee members, co-opted members and staff for their work and help over the past year, especially Susie Robins, who has stood in for the best part of the year, whilst I sort out other issues.

The Chairman then asked Mr. Conrad Evans to present his Operations Report for 2012/13:

“Planting though successful was made difficult due to 2 bouts of snow with planting being suspended for a week as a result. The total of hedging and trees planted was slightly up on last winter with 5,300 on the Jersey Hedgerow Campaign and 1,291 on sundry projects making a grand total of 6,591. The Hedgerow Campaign had 2 focus points; one was for squirrels, it being the first year of a 3 year rolling programme of planting which has been funded by Environment's Countryside Enhancement Scheme. Just over 2,150 whips (195 trees and 1,984 hedging whips) were planted amounting to 1.6 km or just over a linear mile in Grouville, between Le Catillon and La Hougue Bie. We will be working from east to west, making our way towards Grands Vaux as this area has been identified by Environment as lacking in connective hedgerows between the groups of trees and wooded areas. We have been helped in particular by the Radisson Blu Hotel who have adopted us as their chosen charity for 2 years. They have provided 2 working parties to assist in the planting as well as carrying out follow up maintenance. Coupled with this they are promoting our work in the hotel and have also provided a number of donations to help fund the project. The other focus of our work on the Hedgerow Campaign was to carry out an extensive replacement exercise. Having surveyed our planting over the last 6 years we identified where losses had occurred and planted accordingly. This amounted to in excess of 400 trees and 2,150 hedging, totalling 2,595 and equating to just under 2 km or nearly 1.5 miles. This works out at about 10% of the total that has been planted to date. We were grateful to receive assistance from a number of sources which included The Probation Service, Waitrose, 6<sup>th</sup> Manton Scout Group, Social Security Work Wise Department and Jersey Employment Trust. Financial assistance was provided by the Howard Davis Farm Trust who granted a sum of money (£1,775) specifically for our replacement planting programme. All in all, it was a

successful but rather prolonged planting season. A total of 4.9 km of linear planting was completed, including new and replacement planting, that equates to just over 3 miles.

The snow previously mentioned as well as strong winds caused havoc in the Island which included damage and losses of many trees at Val de la Mare. In the collection, mainly the evergreens such as eucalyptus and pine species suffered. Some were pushed down and uprooted by the snow, some sustained damage to their branches and crowns whilst others were left leaning and had to be felled. We are still dealing with trees in and around the various zones and are catching up with work of managing the vegetation, taking care to leave as much of the wild flowers as possible. Again we have been lucky in receiving help from outside agencies. Work Wise is providing clients in order to give them new skills and we have had input from the Jersey Employment Trust and have made new inroads with Jersey Autism. Victoria College organised some 90 pupils to carry out woodland management that included pulling up or cutting self seeded weed plants and trees such as sycamore, evergreen oak and bramble. A similar task was carried out by the 6<sup>th</sup> Manton Scouts as well as Le Rocquier School. Rawlinson Hunter, as one of the original sponsors who paid for the majority of the tools and machinery as well as funding the Elm Trial Zone, has also provided a work party. They moved the fallen trees that we had previously cut up and stacked the limbs and brushwood in useful habitat piles for the likes of invertebrates, hedgehogs and birds to benefit from.

In May we were visited again by Dr Owen Johnson, the Principal Measurer for the Tree Register of the British Isles. He initially came over in 2003 to launch the Jersey Tree Register. He was specifically invited back to identify some trees at Val de la Mare whose identity was uncertain. It was a really useful trip and we learned a lot from his vast tree knowledge. During his trip he found more national champion trees to add to our impressive portfolio.

Maintenance on the Jersey Hedgerow Campaign and other planting schemes are ongoing. Assistance has been gratefully received from Radisson Blu Hotel, CitiBank on the Hedgerow Campaign. In conclusion, on the staff front, we have recently taken on a new employee Robin Hart who will provide welcome and vital back up assistance to Don Jones.”

The Chairman then requested that Mr. Michel Morel present the Education Report.

“Once again I am delighted to report that I have had an exciting and varied 12 months in my capacity as the Education Officer for Jersey Trees for Life.

The activities that I have led have been for a wide range of groups and ages from a nursery class to a group of senior citizens!

The groups for whom I have led activities included:

Whitley Bay Scouts from the north east (while on a camping trip in Jersey), De La Salle College (where I had the pleasure of working with long standing member and art teacher Mark Blanchard), Highlands College, Manton Scouts, St Ouen’s Senior Citizens, Georgetown Methodist Church, Jersey College for Girls, Jersey College for Girls Preparatory School, Grainville School, Jersey Goldsmiths (Cracker Pull Record Attempt), Jersey Gardening Club,

Rouge Bouillon School, St George’s School, Mont Nicolle School, Bel Royal School, Helvetia House School, St Aubin’s Methodist Church Holiday Club, Victoria College, Victoria College Preparatory School, First Tower School, Les Landes School, Samares School and St Martin’s School

The range of activities that have been used in these sessions include: leaf identification exercises; the making of leaf mobiles; St Peter’s Valley woodland walks, Val de la Mare / Forgotten Forest walks, assemblies; displays; talks about the work of Jersey Trees for Life in general; using items from the woodland floor to produce art work and bespoke sessions tailored to the needs of the specific group.

I am very pleased with the progress that has been made with regard to the Association's website. Many thanks must go to Gerard Farnham who has selflessly volunteered many hours to work on creating the new website and getting it up and running. The new site will also allow new supporters to pay and donate online. I am delighted to report that JTFL was advised only last week that it has received its first ever direct debit payment online! New technology is playing an increasingly important role in society and Gerard's knowledge in the area of social media will be very helpful in the Association's efforts to reach out to younger generations as it strives for a sustainable future. Indeed, the investment of the States of Jersey's Education Department in Forest Schools where a teacher in every primary school has been trained in using woodland as a tool for the provision of educational resources and experiences has permitted the Association to focus its education offering more widely.

As Jon mentioned in the Chairman's Report I will not be continuing with the administrative responsibilities of the Association as I am taking up an opportunity to return to the classroom (or laboratory) on a part time basis in Suffolk. I am delighted to have been offered the opportunity to continue to deliver the Association's education program and produce the newsletter. I am enthusiastically looking forward to working with Gerard to develop the website further and use it as an important tool to spread the Association's mission to save our Island's and indeed our planet's trees.

My role will become more like that of my predecessor who worked remotely from home and was not office based at the Frances Le Sueur Centre. I am very excited about the new model to deliver the Association's education program. As my role in Suffolk is part time, there will still be opportunity to offer workshops in Jersey, particularly in the summer when those outdoors are far more popular!

As my role is changing dramatically and I will no longer be full time, I do feel that it's appropriate to say a few words of thanks: to Don, and especially Conrad, who have been wonderful colleagues; all past and present committee members who have been very supportive; the past and present Secretaries, Treasurers, Vice- Chairs and Chairs and finally the Association itself for 4 ½ very happy years.

Thank you."

The Chairman then invited the members to ask any questions regarding the reports. There were none.

#### **4. Annual Accounts.**

Mr. Peter Beamish presented the accounts, copies of which had been circulated. The Treasurer explained that the accounts were presented in a format this year in order to comply with the UK Charities Commission requirements, which were likely to be required in Jersey in the future.

He reported that the statements showed a solvent year during which there was a remarkable surplus of £44,401; a dramatic improvement on the situation during his first two years in post. Donations and grants during the year had increased to roughly £73,000. Mr Beamish stated that costs had been controlled throughout the year. The Association had held its celebratory 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary dinner during the year and had raised over £2,000. It had not been the intention of the Association for the dinner to raise funds but that this had happened due to the generous sponsorship of Dyson and Buesnel Architects and also the fact that the Guest Speaker, Sir Tim Smit, had asked for only a nominal donation to be made to his charitable trust in return for speaking at the event.

The Treasurer further reported that as the bond portfolio was reaching maturity, the decision had been made to sell five bonds and to invest the resultant proceeds into a fixed interest fund managed by Collins Stewart. At the year end the Association held assets worth £673,000 and the Val de la Mare fund stood at £53,000. Mr Beamish explained that such a balance sheet could prove disadvantageous when applying to various bodies for funds and grants. He further explained that some of the Val de la Mare fund would need to be spent on unforeseen Arboretum maintenance necessitated by the substantial snowfall in March which had damaged some of the trees in the collection.

Mr Beamish thanked Stephen Philips and the whole team at Alex Picot who had audited the accounts for the Association: a commercial operation could have expected to pay in the region of £3,000 for the services provided he added.

The Treasurer concluded by saying that he had enjoyed his four years in post and wished to thank Michel Morel for the administrative support that he had provided during that time.

There were no questions about the accounts or the reports from the members present.

The Treasurer recommended the accounts for approval. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Mrs Susie Robins and seconded by Mr Philip Le Brocq. This adoption was approved unanimously by a show of hands.

## **5. Committee members.**

Mrs Sally Fillieul was due to retire by rotation in accordance with rule of the objects and rules of the Association. Mr. Peter Townend and Mr. Peter Beamish had retired from the Committee and co-opted members Ms Joy Carry and Mr. Philip Le Brocq were due to retire. The Chairman explained that Mr Philip Le Brocq had been co-opted onto the Committee to replace Mr Peter Norman who had resigned from the Committee in October due to his parish duties and Ms Joy Carry had been co-opted onto the Committee due to her expertise in the finance industry. Mr Peter Townend had resigned from the Committee in March.

Mr Dyson explained that Mrs. Sally Fillieul, Ms Joy Carry and Mr. Philip Le Brocq had offered themselves for re-election and that he proposed they be re-elected en bloc. This was seconded by Mr Michael Felton. The proposal was unanimously approved on a show of hands.

A nomination had been received for the remaining vacancy on the Committee. Mrs Elena Padfield was proposed by Mrs Susie Robins and seconded by Mr Michael Felton. On a show of hands, Mrs Padfield was unanimously elected onto the Committee.

Mr Dyson concluded this agenda item by stating that the new Committee may make an approach to Mr Gerard Farnham to be a co-opted member due to his expertise in website design and social media.

## **6. The Election of Honorary Auditors.**

Alex Picot was elected as auditors to the accounts. This was proposed by Mr. Peter Beamish and seconded by Ms Joy Carry. The proposition was carried unanimously.

Mr Dyson thanked those who had attended and closed the meeting at 7.28 pm.

Chairman .....

Date.....