

HASTINGS
TRUST

Trust Us

ISSUE 3

A Quarterly Periodical

JUNE 1992

PULLING OUR WEIGHT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

On Saturday 30th May Hastings Pier groaned under the strain of several tug-of-war teams keen to pull their weight for the environment. The aim of the event was to raise awareness of the Earth Summit that is taking place in Rio de Janeiro on 12th June where world leaders will be discussing pressing environmental problems.

Pre-arranged teams and members of the public on the day were encouraged, not only to participate physically, but to think about these important issues and to sign their own personal pledge-'leaf' for the environment, promising local action. These leaves were then attached to a Hastings 'Tree-of-Life' model - leaves which have since been sent to Brazil to join an international tree for the politicians to consider.

On the day numerous leaves were collected, adding to the previous total of 338 leaves that schools and individuals had signed. 92 pledges have also been sent to the Prime Minister with appeals for nation-wide initiatives.

At 10 am Radio Sussex arrived for three live interviews about the Trust, the 'Tree-of-Life' campaign and the tugs-of-war. The Observer newspaper took some photos of the teams and the Hastings tree, whose leaves "were fluttering in the wind".

The first teams were roped in to pull at 11am! The teams included MacDonaldis, the Territorial Army, the Pier Association, Pinks Body Builders, children and adults of the world, the 'environmental nasties' in their fancy-dress, and of course, Mad Jack's Morris Dancers who made the day so colourful.



They also managed to perform several lively dances between each tug!

Tension was high as the T.A. and Pinks dug their heels in to pull for the world and their reputations! An all womens team proved that four of them were better than "Willie" - the body-builder! Needless to say, in the male/female tug the men found it necessary to cheat and one of the T.A. tried to escape over the side of the pier!

Fiona Pit-Kethley proved she could stand her ground as she took on several of the teams (with support!) and very kindly donated some signed copies of her latest anthology, *Journeys to the Underworld*, which the winning teams received along with certificates. Many thanks to her, Martin Honeysett and George Hay who turned up to support on

the day. Thanks not only to them but also to Kathleen Crozier, Liam Genockey, Angie Braven, Gus Cummins, Laetitia Yapp, Roger Hubbard and Michael Davies for signing the certificates. Our thanks also to the Hastings Pier Association for allowing us to use the forecourt as a venue, to the Lifeboat Association who lent the rope, to the shops, restaurants and pubs who agreed to advertise the event, to all the teams who participated and anyone who got involved on the day.

ISOBEL STODDART

Is your event covered by the local press? No! Then why not submit an article for publication in this newsletter.

WANTED: £1 MILLION BY SEPTEMBER

The St Mary-in-the-Castle project looks very promising. The proposal to turn the church into a multi-purpose cultural centre for the arts, sports, entertainment, conventions and visitor attractions has caught public imagination. But success is by no means assured. A great deal of hard work, ingenuity and, probably, luck will be needed over the coming months.

Cash is the crux of the matter. The capital cost of completing renovation work and equipping the building is estimated at £1.35 million. Hastings Borough Council has only £347,000 earmarked. An extra £1 million must therefore be raised, and a clear and convincing strategy is needed for making the centre economically self sufficient from then on.

The Council has set a deadline of September. By then it wants to know whether the project is a runner. If not, other possible uses will be pursued.

The way the project has evolved is a perfect example of how the Trust can assist and support local initiative. The driving force came from local people who believed there was a better alternative to

leasing the Church to a private company for a heritage experience on '1066 and all that'. They banded together and formed Friends of St Mary which grew rapidly and is now a thriving organisation. The Trust made office facilities available to the Friends, and Trust staff and consultants helped devise a project strategy, produce a leaflet and Prospectus and submit a funding application to the EEC.

Key aspects of the strategy are:

- Co-ordination by a Working Party made up of representatives of the Council, the Trust, Friends of St Mary and the Riviera Gallery Association, i.e. a public/voluntary partnership;
- Building momentum and encouraging community participation by publishing promotion material, opening the church for public viewing, holding workshops, opening a project office next to the Church and involving as many volunteers as possible;
- Attracting grant aid and sponsorship from a wide range of sources including public

appeals.

- Long term management of the project by a charitable body; possibly the Trust but more likely a new, specially constituted organisation.

The Friends have worked vigorously and the project office is now open with a well designed exhibition. Workshops have been held generating many new ideas and opportunities. Several funding applications have been made with others in the pipeline. South East Arts have been shown round the church.

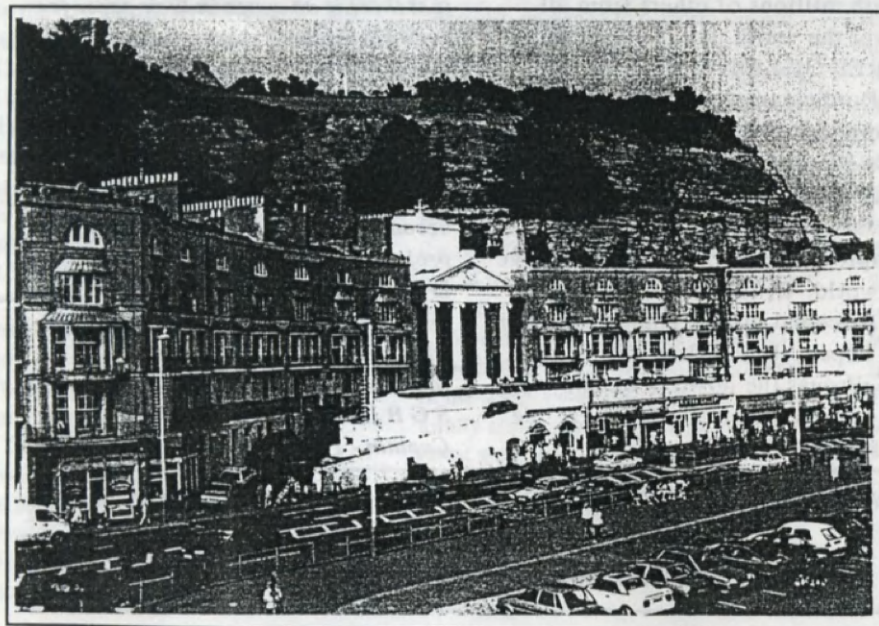
The groundwork has been done but the real grind is just beginning. Volunteers are desperately needed, particularly people with fund-raising skills or with contacts with potential funders.

If the project comes off it will be a triumph for Hastings, a remarkable victory for the Friends and an important vindication of the enabling strategy of the Trust.

All hands to the pump.

NICK WATES

For more information including details of the proposals, pick up a leaflet and Prospectus from the Trust office at 58a High Street, Old Town or visit the new St Mary's Project Office at 7 Pelham Crescent. Tel: (0424) 430580



STOP PRESS! PRINCE OF WALES LAUNCHES SEASIDE CHALLENGE

HRH launched a regeneration initiative for seaside towns last week, on behalf of the Civic Trust, the English Tourist Board and the Rural Development Commission. In the press release, Hastings Trust was highlighted as an example of good practice in dealing with problems faced by towns like ours. This resulted in 2 interviews on Radio Sussex, with a conference for seaside trusts to network information coming up following a suggestion by the Acting Director. Watch this space.

EDITORIAL

Six months on from its launch as an initiative to improve the environment of Hastings, the Trust has completed its first managed project, the Burton Memorial Garden. The direct cost to the community charge payers is £1080, although the worth of the project has been estimated at £30,000.

Not that all went smoothly, an estimated 14 days work was completed in 8 for the project to finish on time. Particular thanks to the local TA, RTW, staff and others who made the final big effort to complete the garden for the Mayor's visit. A tidy up outside the site is in progress and there are funds enough to provide the seating, rubbish bins and interpretation points planned.

The lack of interest in this community achievement shown by our local press was disappointing. What is far more disappointing is that five plants have been dug up and stolen from the site along with some of the Trust's equipment. As Mother's Day is behind us one can safely assume that the towns "skateboarding" generation were not responsible for this particular instance of social degradation. Also it should not go unmentioned that it was evident that most support came from outside the Trusts own membership and board of trustees. Perhaps this small success will inspire wider support for future projects. None of this constitutes a disaster and, ever positive, we look forward to applying the lessons learned to our ongoing activities.

Our main project this summer will centre around assisting Torfield Special School to turn a disused nursery into a wildlife resource for the benefit and education of the children. Any individuals or organisations interested in supporting this initiative should contact us at the Trust's offices.

Telephone: (0424) 446373

WHISTLE BLOWING CEREMONY

At 4pm on the 24th of May the Right Worshipful The Mayor of Hastings, Cllr June Fabian blew the whistle marking the end of "Environment Week" and bringing to a successful conclusion, after only thirty years, the Burtons' Memorial Garden. This happy outcome has been achieved mainly due to the tremendous support we had from volunteers, commercial sponsors, local associations, Borough and County officials.

Financial contributions whether donations or grants, have played a major role in the feasibility of the whole project and indicate to us that many many people care about their environment and are prepared "to put their money where our mouth is".

To all these people and organisations we would like to express our thanks-without you it wouldn't have happened. There is at present a photographic display, in the Trust's resource centre, charting the progress of works and showing some of those involved. Please show your support of their efforts by dropping in to see it.

The Archaeological report is also available, price £1, 50% of which will go to HAARG the remainder to future Trust projects.

David Jeapes

SAVE THE WHALE

Greenpeace have been campaigning to "save the whale" for 17 years. This may seem to be a long time but really it isn't when you consider that whaling, in some form or other, has taken place since the twelve century.

The worst time for whales was in the period between the mid-nineteenth century and the 1930's as technology was harnessed to their slaughter.

In 1949 the International Whaling Commission was formed to "manage" the whale stocks but it wasn't until the 1970's that environmental groups such as *Greenpeace* pressured them to introduce a moratorium which they did in 1986.

Since then **14,000 whales** have been killed in the name of scientific research by Japan, Iceland and Norway.

On Sunday June 14th I will be participating in the "*Greenpeace walk for the Whales*" around Trent Park (on the Northern outskirts of London).

Greenpeace need as much money as they can get in order to carry on their work in trying to save these magnificent creatures. If you would like to sponsor me or find out more details of how you can help call (0424) 446373 or call *Greenpeace* on (071) 345 5100.

WALK THIS WAY

Over the past six months the Hastings Trust has been developing contacts with the YHA and we are now hoping to work together to improve local rights of way. The YHA has chosen the Hastings Hostel as one of four pilot projects in an Environment Initiative. The YHA see its future as having an educational/developmental role in conservation, particularly with regard to young people and would like hostels to be centres of good environmental practice.

Jane Pullinger is the new warden in Guestling and she is hoping to start up an affiliated BTCV group at the hostel so that volunteers can work on the grounds. There is a beautiful woodland walk around a small lake but there is a lot of work to be done if the area is to be made fully accessible. Jane is keen to make local contacts and display information about local group activities at the hostel. The public rights of way from the hostel to the coast and country park are in need of review and there have already been some minor injuries caused by stiles in states of disrepair and paths that have not been cleared.

The Hastings Trust has written to the County Rights of Way Officer and the Countryside Commission about a new scheme: PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP. This scheme aims to give local people the resources and skills to enable them to improve their rights of way and keep them open and in use. A grant is available from highway authorities via local councils. The Trust hopes to have a meeting of all interested parties so that local efforts can be co-ordinated and a monitoring system can be set up.

Meanwhile Jane has asked me to mention that Hastings Youth Hostel are looking for a Temporary Seasonal Assistant for July and August. Duties would include: general admin., reception duties, cash handling, cleaning toilets, cleaning the kitchen, cooking for up to 40 people and the opportunity to develop environmental work in the grounds. It would be live-in with food provided and shift work (mornings and evenings). For a job description and salary details contact: Jane Pullinger, Hastings Youth Hostel, Guestling Hall, Rye Road, Guestling, Hastings, East Sussex, TN35 4LP. Tel: 812373

JULIET FOOT

Sponsors/Advertisers needed to ensure the continuation and expansion of this publication. If you can help in any way please call us on: (0424) 446373

DISEMBODIED VOICES

As I answered the telephone in the Resource Centre two weeks or so ago, a disembodied voice came down the line: "Hello, this is BT, can you come for an interview to discuss your Community Partnership Project - May 26th. or 27th., either in Canterbury or Southampton? The Trust has been short-listed out of 400 Community Partnership Projects submitted from all over the Southern Home Counties, and we would like to discuss it further."

We agreed on May 26th. in Canterbury at around 12.30. I'd have gone to Southampton, Poole or Timbuktu at midnight, if it meant getting funding for the project which was actually still in its research stage, but already had a great deal of support from many of the local agencies groups and organisations in Hastings.

The idea we submitted was under one of the four areas that BT are funding this year, 'Youth and the Environment'. Research and liaison with other groups and agencies, voluntary, public sector and residents on the Broomgrove Estate, showed a need for a project for young people which would involve them in their local community without it being seen as top-down and patronising. Therefore a delicate and non-intrusive touch was needed, but outside funding was necessary if we were going to be able to offer something positive and enduring.

It was exciting to have been short-listed, and on the drive over, Juliet and I rehearsed the sort of questions we thought they might ask and wondered

how formal this board was going to be. We need not have worried. Met at reception by Kevin Ruck of BT's Community Affairs Unit, we were whisked upstairs to meet the interview panel of three, who were at great pains to explain exactly what they meant by Community Partnerships, and how they felt they could give greater support to groups than they had in the past. They then probed in some depth about the aims and objectives of the Project, who would benefit, why we were bothering to do it, why should they bother funding it, and what we hoped to achieve at the end of it?

The interview lasted about a half an hour, and was informative for both sides. On the drive back, we mulled over the interview - as one inevitably does. Juliet, who had spent a long time doing the research, felt that we had answered every question succinctly, even with some passion on occasion. However, on more thoughtful analysis we decided that, unfortunately for us, there wasn't a finite end to the project, within a year, which seemed to be what BT were seeking. Certainly there were firm goals set for the first year, if it got going, but we assumed the project would be long-term and on-going, as did all the other groups who were involved in setting it up.

All involved in setting up the Broomgrove Project await the outcome of BT's deliberations with baited breath, but the very fact of getting it short-listed proves its merit.

Christine Goldschmidt

ORE EARTH SUMMIT

At the request of Red Lake Primary School children, Juliet Foot (community education officer) and I gave a presentation to the 9-11yr old pupils on the issues and aims behind the Earth Summit being held in Rio, June 3rd-14th.

The children understood that there are many things that they could do themselves locally. Not least of which was to make a personal pledge to help the environment. Pledges made included, promising to use less electricity, recycle domestic waste, join a conservation group and many more. Over 100 Pledges were made then returned to the Trust. By way of Red Star and British Airways the children's pledges,

with millions of others from all over the world, will be hung on the TREE OF LIFE in Rio.

Duplicates of all these pledges were sent to Mr John Major urging the government to improve their environmental record and commit themselves by changing policies to improve the environment and leave a world "fit for children to live in".

A second visit is planned when, it is hoped, the children will be able to discuss the positive outcome of the Earth Summit. "If there is one".
Catherine Griffin

DEAR EDITOR

Burtons' Tomb Memorial - May 92

I should be glad if you would arrange to include an acknowledgement of the £500 donation by the Burtons' St. Leonards Society towards the above tidy-up, in the next issue of "Trust Us".

Yours

Alma Hanson

Hon. Secretary -

Burtons' St. Leonards Society

Thank you for the framed photo of our men on the Hastings Half Marathon. It has been a pleasure being involved with the Burton Memorial Garden project. Local TA soldiers have been impressed and influenced by the energy and concern of Hastings Trust staff for the presentation and upkeep of Hastings. It is an example that the soldiers will hopefully spread throughout their own neighbourhood.

It is important that all the townsfolk are aware of this positive move by Hastings Trust and try to catch the spirit of pride. If the local press would cover such events, it would certainly help to generate some enthusiasm. It would also let us all identify with the business firms, who in this time of recession, have still given assistance to the project. Surely they deserve some recognition in the local press for such deeds.

I am told, that the local press have been invited on various occasions by yourselves, to no avail. Is there so much doom and gloom in Hastings, that there is no space in their paper for such positive and successful projects? I hope you are making every effort to whip up support from some positive thinking member of the local press. Or is there none?

'C' Company look forward to becoming involved in another of your projects in the future (Press coverage or not). We would also like to take this opportunity of thanking all the people who sponsored us in the Half Marathon.

S G B Hinton

Captain - PSAO 'C' Company

We invite correspondence/articles for inclusion in our next issue.
Please submit to the Editor.

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