

Newsletter January 2023

FRIENDS OF BRIDE'S MOUND



c/o The Old Clinic, 10 St. John's Square, Glastonbury, Somerset BA6 9LJ

Email: friendsofbridesnew@yahoo.co.uk

IMBOLC - Wednesday 1st February, 2023

The Friends of Brides Mound invite you to join us for the day, traditionally known as Imbolc, the feast day of St. Brigid.

1pm Walk to Bride's Mound with Joanne Mudhar;

meet outside the White Spring, where the White and the Red springs join.

Wear clothing and footwear suitable for wet and muddy conditions!

2.30pm Gathering around the fire on Bride's Mound.

Everyone is very welcome to join us either for the whole walk or just for the gathering on Brides Mound, where there will be a fire, drink and nibbles.

The Mound can be accessed via the Friends track.



Photo credit: Richard Mudhar

Serena

Friendships

We warmly invite you to renew your membership of Friends of Bride's Mound now (if you don't already pay your contribution with a standing order). To renew your membership via Paypal, or to download a membership form to renew by post, please visit our website here: <https://www.friendsofbridesmound.com/friends.html>

If you set up a new standing order can you please email us (friendsofbridesnew@yahoo.co.uk) so that we know your details and can send you newsletters.

Your membership fees are a vital resource in our work to care for, and protect the land we purchased 18 years ago, when this precious and special site was threatened with industrial development. Back then the land cost us £82,000, and since then, thanks to your support, the loan has been reduced to under £10,000 a significant achievement! Of course, our aim is to pay the entire loan off, and to do this we count on your continued support. As a group of volunteers, we make very careful use of all funds raised, and our wonderful volunteer Land Manager Miranda Bruce secures government support for our significant environmental work on the land, as well as renting the land out for grazing, which not only maintains the special traditional quality of the land, but also brings in vital revenue. We also extend our sincere thanks to the stewards who volunteer each year at Glastonbury Festival to bring in vital financial support for the Friends of Bride's Mound. For information re stewarding contact Serena friendsofbridesnew@yahoo.co.uk

Joanne

The Friends of Brides' Mound AGM



Photo credit: Richard Mudhar

The Friends of Brides Mound AGM is on Thursday 23rd March 2023 at 7.00pm at The Library of Avalon, Glastonbury Experience back courtyard, 2 – 4 High St. Glastonbury, BA6 9DU. Followed by drinks and nibbles and general chat.

Everyone is welcome. Please do join us.

Serena

Land Management update

A plan is beginning to formulate around our intention to begin our rewilding project on Friends of Bride's Mound land and I thought it's the right time to share with our Friends what that will look like.

We will be continuing as normal until year ending April 24.

We will then come out of Single Payment and hopefully have Government wildlife enhancement grants in place and will be working in closer relationship with the Wildlife Trust for additional grants and advice.

Our contract with Grazier will change.

We will be looking for someone to cut grass and graze sheep with no enrichment (muck spreading). Will still need hedge flailing for the hedge along the Ridge and some portions of the hedge on the boundary between our fields and the Mound field, in order to maintain the view of the mound from the river Brue and the appreciation of the landscape continuity/contours of the Ridge and the Mound.

Allow other areas of hedges to grow taller and thicker.

Wildlife enhancement will include some shallow scraping and water retaining strategies; at the Brue end of the second field and also around the Pollard willows, to encourage wetland.

Allow the willows in the far corner of the first (triangle) field, to continue falling and re growth, with some additional tree planting to create a thicket in that area. Perhaps include the circle of birch that was sabotaged when the trees were stolen, on our first tree planting project some years ago.

Some resurfacing of the stone track.

New hedge and tree planting on our North most boundary.

Identify other areas for tree planting.

I hope this plan pleases you all. The pond area already significantly floods when we have heavy periods of rainfall and I often see wading birds drawn to it. Once even, a group of large grey herons. We are looking forward to encouraging more wildlife habitat to join with other surrounding areas and creating corridors to Ham Wall and Shapwick Heath.

Miranda, Land Manager

Town Deal Fund - Brides Mound Centre

During the past year we have received the government money that is being offered to Glastonbury called the Town Deal Fund! We are right now in negotiation with the property developer to buy a small portion of his land just south of the orchard and Brides Mound chapel field. Fingers crossed and the purchase will be completed by Imbolc. We have received the contract and are in discussion with him. Our plan is to build a roundhouse with shingle roof, solar panels, air source heat pump, in order to house a meeting area, toilet and information boards. There will be disabled parking spaces, bike racks, picnic area, and disabled access to the Chapel field with its orchard and the archaeological remain on the hill. We have been really fortunate in that a local retired architect, David Binns, has very kindly done all the work needed for the planning application free of charge, and here is his latest revised plan. We hope to have these in to Mendip District Council by Imbolc, this being dependent on the land purchase.



We are collaborating with South West Heritage Trust who manage the Chapel field. They are proposing to create disabled access through the orchard and up to the chapel site. They are planning on marking out the plans of the chapel on the ground, as well as creating a wilder area, in particular planting trees in the south east corner to shield the ugly industrial units from view. Interestingly the access path was part of the original vision of the Friends when we first started.

We are also working with Somerset Wildlife Trust who will start the process of creating a nature reserve in our fields. Initially this will mean creating more wetland in our southern field by extending the pond we made, having a late hay cut in July to enable more meadow flowers to inhabit the fields, and having it grazed in the winter months. There is also a suggestion of planting a hedge on our northern boundary.

By creating this centre we will hopefully enhance peoples' experience of Brides Mound by giving them all the information about the archaeological finds and the myths and legends of this sacred hill. Brides Mound is also an ancient gateway to Avalon, as the place where it meets the river is a natural ford and on the other side of the river are Bronze Age trackways leading from Sharpham. Therefore, the Wildlife Trust vision of linking Beckery with the nature reserves in the Avalon Marshes is very much in keeping with the spirit of this land.

Serena