

# Corsham Spotlight

November, 2005

Volume 3, Issue 3

*Newsletter of the Corsham Civic Society*

Complimentary Copy

## Editorial

At the risk of repeating myself, where has this year gone? Here we are, already talking about Christmas, and presents – so don't forget our Anniversary Calendar', which will make excellent small gift/stocking fillers, especially for friends and family who may have moved away. (See Page2.)

As always we would love to have some more people to help us in organising the many things we would like to do over the next coming year. The 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Brunel's death, so much to do – (see page 8).

We would also like to contribute to Heritage Open Days, it runs over a weekend in September – and needs a few people to get together about once a month from April – September, to organise. Since we had a break in 2005, some things may bear repeating, but there are new items to include too. We have plenty to offer in the area, and it would be nice to have the opportunity to share it particularly with all the newcomers to our town.

**Please contact a member of the Executive if you could help**, you don't need to join the Executive, but could be



*From the  
Chairman and*



*Merry Christmas*

responsible for one small project in its entirety. Many hands make light work!!

Well, that's the commercial over!

What do you think of the new 'Pay to Car Park' scheme? Have you written to your local councillor to voice your opinion about the possible closure of the Tourist information centre? (See item page 10). It's a bit like going to the Doctor - If you don't tell them how you feel, they won't know how to treat the problem. I would like to hear your views about that or any other aspect of life in Corsham – we could then include a 'Letters/opinion page' in future issues.

**Drop a line to the Editor.**

We hope you all have an extremely good festive season, and that you will join us again next year.

*Pat Whalley*

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## ASHTAV - Summer walk around Bruton

As members of the "Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages", Society members are given the opportunity to attend ASHTAV meetings and events. This time it was a summer walk around Bruton, Somerset.

Three of our members attended, and despite the occasional shower, were able to enjoy an interesting walk around the town. Starting at the church of St Mary's - Saxon in origin, with a fine perpendicular nave, two towers and a very unusual chancel without a window at the rear, and then to the site of the Augustine Abbey. Since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Bruton has had a reputation for fine schools, Hugh Sexey, a financier and benefactor of the town was responsible for the introduction of a school, initially for boys, but now co-ed; he also provided money for a fine Hospital in the town, which now houses the elderly; and funded almshouses for the old and impoverished.

The only problem this small town seems to have is 'Car Parking'. No surprise there!!

Just out of the town is Gants Mill, a fine example of Victorian technology for grinding corn, and 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to enable them to generate electricity.

The day was made complete with tea and cakes and a walk around the garden at Gants Mill. Well worth a visit if you are ever in the area.

## The Burrowes Papers

We are extremely grateful to Michael Burrowes (son of our members - Dr & Mrs Burrowes) for donating to us his work on Corsham Poor House. In 1975 whilst at university studying architecture, Michael prepared as part of his course work, plans, photographs and details of 'Catherine's Court'. This turned out to be very fortunate, because during that year, the building was ravaged by fire, and we therefore have a before and after record.

It is intended to display these papers at our first meeting of the New Year - end January 2006.

We are delighted to have received another important piece of our town's historic record to retain for the future.

## Corsham, 'Past & Present' Calendar

When Peter Tapscott asked for volunteers to work on a possible Calendar project our initial reaction was that, as relative newcomers, we should wait a while before becoming involved in such a high-profile enterprise. True, we had produced our own domestic calendar for several years (mainly to keep in touch with distant friends and family) but what did we know about Corsham? A few months later, we learnt that there had been no other volunteers - so, with the support and expert guidance of Pat Whalley and Peter, we embarked on a journey of discovery as we sifted through the Civic Society's wonderful photographic archives. The idea of contrasting old images with new meant that colour could play a more prominent role in the calendar-design and also justified us indulging in our main hobby (and retirement presents!). For reasons of space we had to be very selective, so (this time) most of the photographs record the changing aspects of historic central Corsham. Now,



## PEEP AT THE PAST “Down with the demon drink”

*Since we are beginning to get into the Christmas ‘Spirit’ we thought a few local ghostly tales might be appropriate!! (Provided by our intrepid reporter Joe James - of course !) So put another log on the fire, and light the candle; ----*

“My nearest approach to a ghost happened one autumn afternoon, ten or so years ago. The telephone rang. A rather anxious lady had just experienced ‘a presence’ and could I come at once please. I knew the property well. The unlikely location was a block of offices in the High Street. Both manageress and staff member had sighted a ghost. “Was it a man or a woman?” I asked. “Neither “was the reply, “It was a dog. The phantom dog was black. It appeared in the back room, rushed into the front office....and disappeared”

I could only offer a clue. Beneath the floor of the back room is a large ancient well. Could the ghost be that of a drowned dog? A strange connection came to mind. I recalled some years ago a senior member of the Spackman family telling me that as a child (around 1900) it was claimed that the ‘Old Vicarage’, also in the High Street, was haunted by ‘an animal’.

“My favourite Corsham ghost appeared in a house close to the site of our old railway station. The previous owners had always testified to a ‘benign presence’. Nevertheless, the present owners were taken aback one day when their young son observed, quite coolly, “Who is that man sitting in the front room? He’s wearing a tall black hat” The mystery was compounded some time later, when the younger daughter queried “Father Christmas is standing in our front room, but he is not dressed like Father Christmas “. Nothing was visible to the adults”.

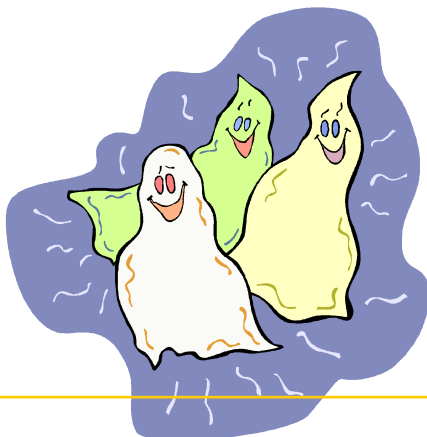
“The Jaggards ghost is established and famous. This historic 16<sup>th</sup> century residence in Neston claims not one but two ghosts.

In 1880, a Mr Bulmer, a curate records: - ‘I suddenly woke up with a start. The moon was shining brightly, and I saw at the end of the bed an old woman in a poke bonnet. She looked straight at me, and then disappeared. Some time after the housekeeper informed me that the old woman was a regular ghost and had often been seen’

Another Jaggards sighting, this time authenticated by the vicar – Mr Loy. The curate was unpacking a box of books, assisted by a maid. ‘I heard a rustling along the passage leading from the room, and looking up, saw with surprise a lady, young looking, in a blue gauze dress with a long train in the style of about 100 years ago. She walked slowly down the stairs and disappeared around a turn, and I could see the folds of her dress gradually disappearing behind her. The maid saw nothing!’

When the late Lord Methuen went to Court, the Queen, more than once, asked him about the ghost at Jaggards.”

**Joe James**





## Gallery



Corsham at it's best – Let's keep it that way!



The Mayo Memorial – Opposite the Flemish Buildings



A close-up of the Mayo memorial

## Waste Collection

*Ed. We are pleased to include this item on waste collection, kindly given to us by Ian Lawrence our local refuse collection driver.*

"We in Corsham have been using wheeled bins for 2 years now. Also you have had the chance to recycle your tin, glass and newspapers. Has this made any difference for you and me? When I started working for NWDC in 1980 as a relief driver, I used to cover for Jim Alford, who sadly died early this year. The crew then did Corsham and Rudloe. They would collect on average 40-50 tons of refuse each week in winter, 50-60 tons in summer, (garden waste, grass cuttings adding to the weight).

With Hatton Way, Masons Way, & Silman Close added to Corsham; Rudloe was moved to the Box round. By the late 80's the refuse trucks (then 16 tons, 6 ton payload) could not handle the increase in refuse being put out each week. This was common all over North Wilts! The refuse fleet was changed over to 25 ton, 11 ton payload, 3 axle trucks (2 each year) to cope. In 1993 I was made your new driver. I liked Corsham so much my wife and I moved here in 1998. At this time the refuse per week was 80-85 tons. In 2002 this had climbed to over 100 tons in summer, hard work for the loaders; the lorry was at full capacity again!

Where does it all go I am asked? In the 70's tips at Grittleton, Sutton Benger, and Leigh Delemare all got filled.

The old RAF Base at Compton Bassett owned by Hill's, was having sand extracted leaving 50 ft deep holes, which we started to fill in 1980 and have done to this date. Over 600 tons a day at the moment. We in Corsham, with wheeled bins, are presently sending about 70 tons a week. The black box collection is 20 tons a week. The new brown bin (green waste) is about 1 ton, but it is only in some parts of Corsham; I am not on the route yet. The total recycled waste from all the centres is around 250 tons a week. Can we do more?"

*Ian Lawrence*



## Waste in Wiltshire

The Wiltshire & Swindon Waste Development Forum have been holding a series of meetings in the area, and our representative Pat Britton, attends those which are relevant to North Wilts. There is room for another member on the team, which would help when holidays and other matters preclude the attendance of one member, so if anyone is interested please step forward.



## Retirement Homes at the ex-Royal Arthur site

You may already have seen local news items regarding the above. This is the 6<sup>th</sup> application that has been made concerning the provision of retirement facilities on this site, and as a Society, we hope that this time it will be successful. It will bring employment to the area, (108 + jobs), and provide very necessary facilities for our increasingly ageing population.

Concerns have always been that there may not be sufficient transport facilities to such a remote site; and that our local Dr's surgeries would not be able to cope. However, this time the developer tells us that they are in consultation with Doctors at Box and Corsham, and as a result have agreed to provide a satellite surgery at the new development. As for transport, the provision of a mini bus on site, together with local mini buses, must alleviate that problem. There are also regulations laid down regarding the future use of any MOD site, but it is believed that these will not be relevant this time. It is hoped that the CTC and the NWDC will agree to the proposal on this occasion.

## ... and at Rudloe Manor

In September there was an open meeting at the Town Hall at which a developer - "Harvest Homes" showing plans for a prospective care home at Rudloe Manor. This site was split some time ago, the first contains the prefabricated buildings which housed RAF personnel, the other is the site of the beautiful Manor house and its surrounds. (I was told at this gathering that the Manor house has been put up for sale.

The part proposed for development, is the first. It will be a retirement village, capable of housing approx 200 people. There will be single and double units, a shop, hairdressers, and other retail outlets. Care will be available for those who are very incapacitated. I saw no reference to the provision of transport, or to availability of medical facilities, either on site or to enable travel to a surgery, but that is not to say those details were not there – I just didn't catch sight of them. I am sure that with a development of this size, these points will have been addressed. The one thing that was different to any other scheme of this type I have seen was the provision of 'Communal eating'. This comprised 2 or 3 restaurants on site to which residents would go for their meals. I asked about this, and was told that the living accommodation would only have space for the provision of, say, a micro-wave for home cooking. I could understand that many elderly people, some not able to manage cooking, would find this invaluable, but I personally felt that perhaps there should be more choice in this area.

It must be remembered that we as a Society have no voice regarding this proposal, it is a matter for Box Parish Council and residents.

All in all, I felt this was a useful proposal, desperately needed in our area, and the need will only increase as our aged population rises. We will give you a progress report, when we are able.

*Pat Whalley*



*Ed: The introduction of these 2 proposals prompted me to ask a recently disabled friend to give me a view of what it was like*

## Living in Corsham as a Disabled Person

My earliest memories of Corsham go back to the early 1950s when as a Saturday girl I ran errands for my great uncle and aunt who ran the Corn Stores next to the Town Hall, - "Wilkins, "as some of you may remember. On returning to the area 2 years ago after my retirement I intended to settle near my family in Box, how glad I am that fate led me to find a house near Corsham.

Wishing to integrate into the community I offered my services at the Dorothy House shop in the precinct, where I met the wonderful friends who sustained me through the next traumatic year when I was diagnosed with MSA (Multiple System Atrophy) as a result of which I am now disabled.

I find that living in such a calm and friendly environment such as Corsham especially reassuring, No gangs of youths roaming the streets, beggars at every corner and no fear of being mugged, the hustle of 21st century life seems to have passed us by. OK there are some cobbles and narrow doorways, but the shopkeepers are helpful and genuinely seem to value your custom. There are few hills but the pavements are reasonably quiet, with seats in the precinct to sit and have a friendly chat with the locals. The shops are interesting and varied, with an excellent choice of "take-aways". Shopping is a pleasure for those who need space and time to manoeuvre. I certainly hope to stay in the town and with the added prospect of the provision of a "Care Community" possibly in the future, then I and other disabled people would be able to continue to share the delights of this town.

*Sandra Archer*

## ‘Kinneir Close’

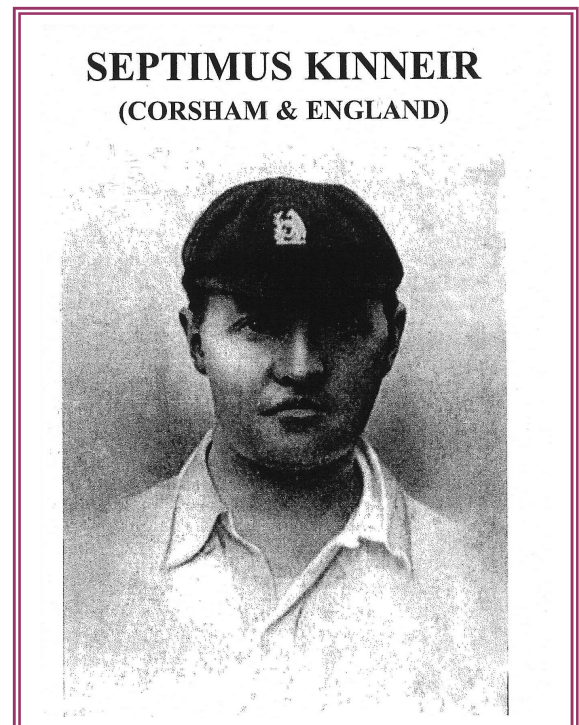
It has been decided to name the new housing development at the ex Altus Engineering site, Stokes Road, "Kinneir Close."

This is to commemorate a Corsham cricketer – Septimus Kinneir - who played for Corsham and England.

Here are few details about him: -

- Born, Pickwick on May 13<sup>th</sup> 1871
- Died, Birmingham on October 16<sup>th</sup> 1928
- Played for Corsham (1883 – 1901)
- Played for Wiltshire (1890 – 1897)
- Played for England (1911 – 1912)

Opening left-hand batsman: right-arm, medium pace bowler: 312 first-class matches: 15,641 runs, 26 centuries: highest score 268: took 48 wickets and 181 catches



## The Town Hall Clock

*Those of you who attended our July meeting, or who have visited the Town Hall in recent months, will have seen the photographs depicting*

We asked Peter Biggins, Deputy Town Clerk, to give us a short resume of the history of the clock, and he tells us:-

"It was in 1897 that the Parish Council's Jubilee Committee agreed to put a clock on the façade of the Town Hall, to commemorate 60 years of the reign of Queen Victoria. The clock was erected in 1898, and functioned without problems until 1939 when urgent repairs were carried out. Between 1939 and 1991 the clock required repairs on only 10 separate occasions for various reasons, including a bird nesting in 1982! In 1965 the clock was updated to include an electrical winding mechanism. (We can find no evidence of who wound the clock faithfully before then. (If anyone knows – please tell us. Ed).

In 2004 it was agreed that the clock should be refurbished and updated. When it was taken down it was found to be in a much poorer condition than previously thought. The main body of the clock was badly corroded, the Perspex was cracked and broken and the internal gears rusted.

Mr Jones the clockmaker took the clock back to his workshop where it spent five months being refurbished. This included fitting a new galvanised steel drum, new Perspex faces, and the shot blasting of the dials and clock hands. The opportunity was also taken for some other updates —a new electrical mechanism and radio control to automatically switch between summer and wintertime. Details on the clock's dial have been covered in 22.5 carat English Gold.

Perhaps the most exciting part of the whole refurbishment was the installation of an illumination system. This had originally been proposed in 1897! The clock was fitted with low energy light bulbs to reduce energy consumption and the frequency for light bulb changes. At night the clock gives off a gentle glow that can be seen from some distance and looks very impressive.

We hope the clock continues to tell the time for the residents of Corsham and visitors alike for at least another century."

*Peter Biggins*

## Greetings!

The Society's greetings cards are really selling pretty well. After a slow start, Wyndham's and Kathy's efforts are being rewarded. They are making regular visits to their 'retail outlets' in the town to promote sales and to ensure that stocks are maintained. The two cards in the initial series are proving highly popular. It's amazing just how often you need a nice card upon which to express a simple message, be it one of thanks or congratulations. People seem to like the idea of conveying that message with a picture of Corsham, to remind the recipient of where the sender lives.

It is a little early, but some thought is presently being given to how to extend the series. The Society has a vast collection of old photographs to draw upon - and the enthusiasm of Wyndham and Kathy to tease out the best possible position from which to take the 'today view' of a yesteryear image knows no bounds. Quite frankly, the possibilities are endless. We would welcome any suggestions that Y:Q! might have regarding which parts of our town to tackle next.

The cards retail at £1.00 each. They are available at the special discounted price of SOp to Society members at our regular monthly meetings.

## North Wilts. Business Forum

The Society was invited by NWDC to attend the North Wilts Business Forum, at the Wiltshire Golf & Country Club, Wootton Bassett, on 8<sup>th</sup> September. It takes the form of a breakfast meeting so only early birds could apply!

We were very fortunate to find that Martin Cadwgan proclaimed an interest, and was duly elected as our Civic Society representative. Thank you Martin.





## Review

In July, our own Les Davis gave us a talk on some personalities of Corsham, and in particular their effect on the wool industry, together with details of family history which must have taken an age to unearth, we were extremely well informed by the end of the evening. If only we could bottle some of Les's energy and enthusiasm!!

The 10<sup>th</sup> August saw a group of us walking the streets of Trowbridge, as guests of their Civic Society. What contrasts of architecture there are to be found in the town, gems like the almshouses, which one never notices when passing in a car; and other stately town houses- some requiring more love and care than finances seem to allow. By passes and one way systems have cut across such a lot of history, but residents continue to work to get the best for their town, and they have many beautiful areas to prove it.

At our open meeting at the end of August we welcomed local Police Inspector David Cullop.

The Inspector is responsible for policing in both Corsham and Calne, and gave us an interesting overview of his and his staff responsibilities in the town. This was followed by a lively question and answer session, which hopefully proved useful.

Our BBQ this year was held in the grounds of Heywood School, and we are extremely grateful to the Principals, Mr & Mrs Hall, for allowing us to be there. The weather was a little overcast, but –no rain, so beef burgers, and sausages were eaten in good company and with gusto. Thank you to Eric for being head chef.

19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century Corsham was not the subject originally scheduled for the September meeting. Our Programme Organiser, Les Davis, had planned a presentation on Victorian Memorabilia. However, that had to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances (the presenter's house became the victim of subsidence). Les himself stood in at the last moment and enthralled his audience with a slide show of photographs depicting the High Street and Pickwick Road between the late 1800s and the present day. His fund of knowledge and anecdotes was thoroughly entertaining – and seemingly endless!!

## Corsham Chamber of Commerce

Over the last 12 months or so the relationship between the Society and Corsham's Chamber of Commerce has been growing. On the face of it we have a relatively small number of things in common. However, one of those is a shared desire to maintain and develop Corsham's town centre. Additionally we work with the Chamber on the Steering Group of the Corsham Area Community Partnership.

Like us, the Chamber holds regular meetings of its members and issues a newsletter. This tends to be monthly but, occasionally, can take the form of a simple news-sheet.

Over time, the thought occurred, 'Wouldn't it be a good idea to hold a joint meeting? To hear what the other party had to say and to explore ways whereby we might help each other.' That has led to two things.

The Chamber has kindly used its news-sheet process to send out a flyer designed by our own Wyndham Thomas to promote the Society's Calendars and Greetings Cards. A copy went out to every member of the Corsham Chamber of Commerce in late September – entirely free of charge.

The 'joint meeting' idea has taken root. We have invited the Chamber to attend our annual 'Mulled Wine and Nibbles Night' on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January. We will ask their President to speak to us (for no more than 10 minutes!) and then allow the convivial atmosphere to tease out where we can work together in the future. A return match is a possibility – but one step at a time.

## Brunel Bicentenary - 2006

Since he made such an impact on the landscape of Corsham, we would like to contribute to this event.

In association with the local TIC, we are planning a Brunel Exhibition at the Heritage Centre, enhanced by a recording of photographs and text ("The Lost Valley") very kindly given to us by Joe James which will outline the story of Brunel and his work in Corsham. This will run during April – the month of his birth. In addition we will finance and have produced a Brunel Trail leaflet, the information for, which will be kindly, provided by Martin Yallop, and which will be available, free of charge, from the TIC on a permanent basis.

We hope to give members a preview of the "Lost Valley" recording at our January meeting.





## Supporting our High Street Shops

The retail sector is not exactly buoyant at this moment. Sales are struggling and rents are always going to be on an upward path – they might be fixed for a period of, say, five years, but the inevitable ‘rent review’ can all-too-easily catch out even the most well run of businesses. Cashflow is a constant problem, especially for those shops, which need to display goods to attract us over the threshold. Stock is ‘dead money’ until it is sold – and then it needs to be replaced.

We have been extremely fortunate in Corsham over recent years. Prior to that, there always seemed to be a shop or ‘unit’ in our High Street or in Martingate Centre, which was empty and looking for a new owner or tenant. Right now every one of them is either occupied or about to be.

The Society enjoys a good relationship with the Corsham retail community. They support us and we like to think that we do all we can to support them. A vibrant shopping centre is vital to our town.

Certain shops ‘go the extra mile’ when it comes to supporting the community through the Corsham Civic Society. Corsham Bookshop provides the prizes for our Secondary School English Award scheme. Right Angle Picture Framing undertakes the mounting and framing of

the winning entries for our Primary School Art Award. Peter and Steve do all this for nothing. And yet their’s are the type of shops which need to carry the greatest stocks if they are to attract us in. Christmas is coming. We urge every one of our members – all 150 of them – to buy at least one item from each of these two community stalwarts during the run-up to the festive period. Go on! Step inside and browse. You won’t necessarily find that they are offering the keenest prices. That is for the big boys in Bath, Swindon and Cribbs Causeway. However, within their chosen sphere of business, they can get almost everything, and you will be doing your bit to support our own town centre. You’ll also be saving time and petrol.

Please do not stop there. There are other retailers who contribute directly towards the community through activities which are not necessarily something they are bound to offer as part of their business. The Post Office comes readily to mind as does the Tourist Information & Heritage Centre. Now there is a threshold that you really ought to step over in search of that special something! There are many others. Let ‘Buy in Corsham’ be our maxim this Christmas.

## Corsham Area Community Partnership, Latest News

The CACP has achieved a great deal since the last edition of Spotlight. The most obvious outcome has been the launch of its 50-page Community Plan at the event held at the Corsham Town Hall on Thursday, 30th June. Over 170 local residents attended, many from the Society’s own membership. The Plan has been made available – in limited quantities in view of the cost involved - at various distribution points and is also on the NWDC website.

An ‘Every Household Summary Leaflet’ is now ready for distribution. 13,000 copies have been printed. They will go out to all households and business premises in Area 4 (Box, Colerne, Corsham, Lacock, Neston and Rudloe) over the period between November and February. A highly cost-effective Royal Mail service (‘Door to Door’) is being employed. Deliveries are batched by postcode.

Meanwhile the task of forming Action Teams to pursue the various key priorities identified in the Community Plan has been underway. Certain individuals had declared a willingness to ‘get involved’. They filled out and returned forms which had been devised and made available for the purpose. The first meeting with all of them was held in October. Each team will now progress under its own momentum, assisted by the membership of the CACP’s Steering Group.

Along with its companion community partnerships in the NWDC geographical area, the CACP is a member of the North Wiltshire Partnership. It operates at a higher level and is there to facilitate actions through such organisations as Westlea Housing and our local Primary Care Trust when needs arise which can be seen to be common to the majority of the community partnerships. It has only just been properly constituted and held its first Annual Conference at the Neeld Hall in Chippenham on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> November. The CACP played a major role in the event.



## Mayo Memorial Restoration

Members attending our monthly Open Meetings might recall that the Society was approached by the Corsham Town Council to undertake the restoration of the Memorial to Canon C Mayo, a prominent 'man of Corsham' who lived in the Ivy House and died in 1895. The project would be more than a simple matter of restoring a decaying edifice constructed out of masonry and lead. It would also include the creation of interpretative literature, demonstrations of the crafts involved, the involvement of local schools and a 'grand opening' – all supported by regular progress reporting in the local press.

These 'project extras' are essential ingredients if the restoration is to qualify for financial support under the Local Heritage Initiative (LHI) – one of the routes by which Lottery funds get directed to projects deemed to be in the public interest. It is this reasoning that brought the Town Council to our door. LHI offers the prospect of 100% funding. However, it's a fact that an application is much more likely to be successful if it comes from a civic society rather than from a town council.

The Corsham Town Council asked us to take on full project management responsibility. They can offer support – including Public Liability Insurance cover – but securing the funding and implementing

the project to time and to budget would be down to us. Naturally we would claim the 'kudos' for a successful project on behalf of the town.

Your Executive decided that we would give it a go. We have a lot of information in our archives on Canon Mayo and the public debate that resulted in the Memorial being erected.

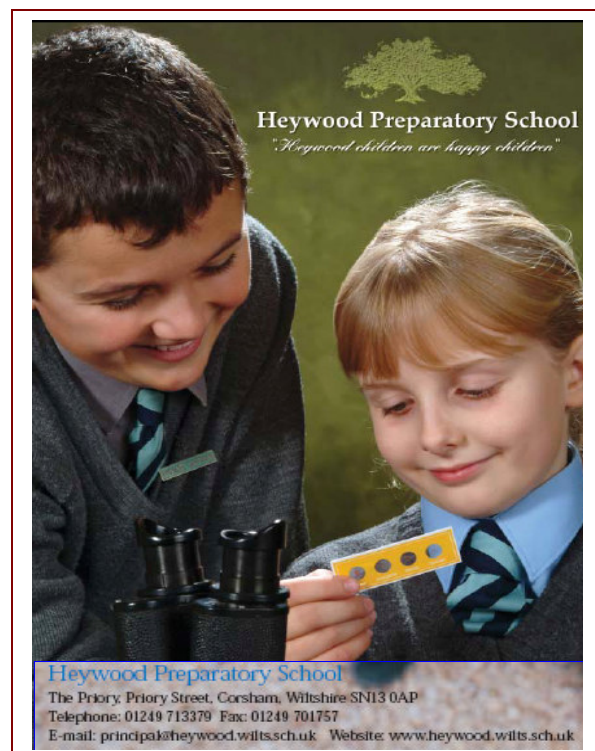
We recognised that the undertaking would need a 'Project Manager'. The project would benefit greatly from having a strong programme manager at its helm. They would not be expected to do any of the specialist tasks themselves but they should be capable of keeping the rest of us working to a schedule. Additionally, it would be a huge asset in the promotional work which would accompany the project if the person taking the position were to have a relevant demonstrable track record. The solution was obvious - Paul Coleman MCIQB MBM FFB, the Managing Director of CMS Bath Ltd., the company that occupies premises in the High Street and employs a staff of 50 in the architectural services business. He agreed to take the role - personally – with the words 'It will be good to put something back into the community'. Paul was introduced to the Society's project team, and the Town Hall staff, at an October meeting.

The next step is to secure the LHI funding, without which there is no project. Stay tuned.

## Future of Corsham TIC - Latest

Thank you to all those members who wrote to their councillors to leave them in no uncertainty that they – as individuals and as members of this Society – wished to see the Corsham TIC continue in its present form. We can only hope that our elected representatives know what is good for them!

In the meantime we recognise that NWDC has an agenda which foresees it walking away from any responsibility to maintain the facility which provides us all with such a vital service in our High Street. Your Executive has been exploring every avenue to find some workable solution to the problem. Our focus has been on trying to come up with a proposal for a financially viable structure for a combined TIC and Heritage Centre into whose hands NWDC can pass the running of such an enterprise. We have been working with other organisations, in search of an appropriate structure. There is no lack of commitment to the cause. Our efforts continue.



## Jazz Returns to Corsham

Corsham staged its second Annual Jazz Festival over the weekend of Saturday/Sunday 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> September. It was an outstanding success, receiving rave reviews from all who attended and claiming lead story position on the Corsham page of the Gazette & Herald. Mark Sammut and his team are to be congratulated.

Lessons were learnt from last year's event. It was a 2-day festival, rather than 3-day. The venues were limited to two – 'Upstairs' at the Royal Oak and the Corsham Town Hall. The number of individual shows was limited to seven, three of which were sell-outs. Unlike last year, the Festival made a healthy profit, benefiting from vastly enhanced financial sponsorship from local businesses. Additionally Corsham Town Council weighed in with £200 and NWDC with £500 towards the running costs.

Financial viability of such festivals rests on the organising team negotiating reasonable deals with the selected artists and selling the tickets for the resulting performances. Both aspects were covered expertly. The team's efforts were rewarded by being able to donate £300 to Wiltshire Air Ambulance and £200 to the American Red Cross to help with the aftermath of hurricane Katrina.

Audiences included locals and people from the Midlands and Home Counties. A wide range of jazz styles was catered for. Children under 12 were allowed in free to encourage youth to listen to jazz and help keep family

costs down. A good number attended. Latin jazz band Paz followed their cool, laid back performance with a burst of audience participation. They invited children as young as six to have a go on their instruments and pound their brand new drum kit, which was just hours old.

'Jazz Factory' played for free to members of the general public in Martingate Centre on Saturday afternoon.

We are especially pleased to record that Peter French's son, Alex, played before most of the concerts. Alex plays jazz/soul piano. He did not charge for his services but thoroughly enjoyed the experience and has since been contacted by two organisations that would like to have him work with them in the future. That's the way it is in the music industry. Ask Jamie Cullum!



## Christmas Lunch – now a New Year's Dinner!

Since everyone is so busy at the run up to Christmas, we thought it would be beneficial for all to allow the Christmas lunch (es) to go down, then we can better enjoy a meal at a later date.

Plans are in hand to meet at the Flemish Weaver on the evening of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January for a 3-course dinner. The 'Weaver' can accommodate 35 people, so if you haven't yet appended your name to the list please do so shortly.

## Society's Notice Board on the Move?

The July edition of 'Spotlight' told readers that we were looking for a new location for the Society's notice board – the one that presently occupies a position on the wall opposite the old Barclays ATM, on the footpath that connects the High Street to the car park behind the Methuen Arms. We think we have found one. If we can pull it off it will be excellent. However, we have to jump through a few hoops yet.

The first two have already been successfully negotiated. We needed to find somewhere with a significantly greater 'footfall' than the old site. This would meet the combined needs of ensuring a good visibility for our notices and (hopefully) rendering the unit less liable to vandalism. We decided that a prominent position in the Martingate Centre suited our needs. The remodelled Chapel retained sufficient 'heritage' to chime both with the aims and objectives of a civic society and the style of our particular notice board. We approached Bill Hall the Director of Martingate Centre Limited to seek his permission to occupy wall space opposite the entrance to the Wiltshire College annex. Bill readily acceded to our request.

Now we face the big one. Planning consent. Yes, we need to submit a planning application to have our notice board re-positioned in the town centre. This has a cost implication. We hope to keep this to a minimum. It also requires that we raise the necessary paperwork. We are working on this. Watch this space!





# Corsham Civic Society

## Civic Society Officers

### President

Mrs Anne Greenly

### Chairman

Mr Peter Tapscott, 4 Charlwood  
Road, Corsham

Tel: 01249 714453

### Hon Sec

Mrs Patricia Whalley, 27 Elm  
Hayes, Corsham

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### Treasurer

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### Membership Secretary

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Close, Chippenham

Tel: 01249 446128

### Plans Chairman

Mr Geoff Knapp, 2 South Street  
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We're on the Web!

See us at:

[www.Corsham-Civic-Society.co.uk](http://www.Corsham-Civic-Society.co.uk)

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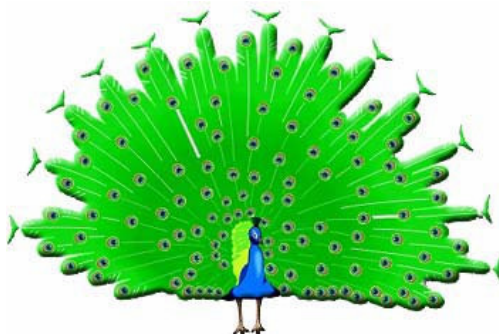
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### *Corsham Civic Society*

*Corsham Civic Society was founded in 1963 to represent the people of Corsham in all aspects of conservation, preservation and the promotion of this delightful Wiltshire town.*

*The Society is a registered Charity, a member of the Civic Trust and ASHTAV (Association of Small Historic Towns & Villages of the UK).*

*It is our aim to promote high standards of planning and architecture, to create a wider awareness amongst the local population of environmental issues, the geography, history, natural history and architecture of the area, and to secure the preservation, protection and improvement of features of public amenity and/or historical interest, both in Corsham and in the surrounding countryside.*



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