

Corsham Spotlight

Newsletter of the Corsham Civic Society

July 2011
Vol. 9 Issue 2

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Contributions to Spotlight are welcome.
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We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.Corsham-Civic-Society.co.uk

Editorial

You will remember that the Civic Society awarded a runners-up Building Award in 2010 to Mr. and Mrs. Barnikel for the work on the renovation of Parkside, in the High Street. The Spring 2011 magazine produced by ASHTAV, of which the Civic Society is a member, has an article by Humphrey Barnikel on the processes he and Elizabeth followed to ensure the limewash was made from the correct materials, giving the right colour and consistency acceptable by the Conservation Officer for their listed home. I have included this article at page 8 as it gives a fascinating insight into how the limewash is made and the various chemical reactions which take place. Humphrey has said that he would be happy to advise anyone who was contemplating undertaking this work on their property.

The middle-page spread this time is on John Hanning Speke, perhaps not known to all, but the explorer who is credited with founding the source of the Nile. There is a memorial to him at Wadswick. It can be approached by public footpath, where there are delightful views towards the south. Well worth a visit, particularly on a clear, sunny day.

Page 2 includes details of an additional meeting in December when members have been invited to view the Bath Spa University accommodation at Corsham Court.

The Society is considering having an "Open Gardens" day next year. We would be looking to members to open their gardens in June, when gardens are usually at their best, and are looking possibly at Saturday June 23rd 2012. Could you all give this serious consideration, please. We will be looking for expressions of interest at the end of the year and based upon the response we will be able to decide whether there is sufficient support to go ahead. All other members are encouraged to help those who do agree to open their gardens.

Can I remind anyone, members and non-members alike, that I am always looking for suitable articles for publication in Spotlight: long articles, short articles, remembrances, the old photo suddenly discovered which may be of interest. You will be amazed at what interests people. Remember, Spotlight is put on our web-site, it can be viewed world-wide. I know we have a readership in both Canada and New Zealand.

Please note, when submitting articles, I prefer a word document with any photos attached separately, not embedded in the article. My contact details are on the left.

Jane Browning

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From the Chairman

It was obvious, as we neared the Society's AGM, that no one had come forward to offer themselves as my successor to be Chairman, so rather than leave the Society without a helmsman, I have continued my role for another year. We have lost 3 important members of the Committee this year. Pat Whalley, after so many years' service, retired at the AGM and so too Sally Fletcher who after serving 4 chairmen felt she needed to retire to work on other things she was interested in. Finally, our younger colleague, Paul Kefford tendered his resignation due to his increasing workload. To these three persons, on behalf of all the membership, we send a grateful thanks for their efforts in moving forward our work.

Now comes the crunch – we have no Secretary, no Minuting Secretary and also have two spaces for Committee members. It is becoming very difficult to administer a Society with 150+ members to the standard with which they have come to expect. If, and this is an important 'if', there is anyone out there, among the 150+ members who can offer their services for any one of these posts, then I shall be more than delighted to speak with them and explain the work involved. For example – the Minuting Secretary would have 6 x 2.5 hour meeting per year to attend, take and prepare the minutes and distribute to Committee members in due course and to prepare the meeting agenda in consultation with me as Chairman. I sincerely hope that someone, somewhere, will step forward and fill these breeches in our Committee structure.

I can tell you that Dr Negley Harte, our Programme Organiser, is working hard to complete the programme for 2012. He is also conducting a building's survey in the town for all those houses, shops etc that have dates carved into the stonework. We have taken photographs of houses in South Street, Hastings Road, the Cleeve and Lypiatt Road, with others to follow. Dr. Harte has a list of buildings with date stones. If you wish to see this list, please contact him direct and he will be pleased to share his information so far collected with you.

Michael Rumsey

Bath Spa University invitation to Corsham Civic Society

Professor Ron George, the Director of the Bath Spa Graduate Centre at Corsham Court, has generously agreed to invite the members of the Corsham Civic Society for drinks at 7pm on Thursday 8th December.

There will be an opportunity to tour the premises used by the University on the first and second floors of the Court. Members will be impressed to see the use of plate glass and modern furniture and the 'modern' art work decorating the walls, alongside the careful conservation of the old staircases, windows and roofs. There will also be music.

All members of the Society are invited. Entrance through the main gates to the Court, then turn left in front of the building and head for the clearly marked entrance to the University's part of the building in the west wing. This occasion promises to be the first party of the Christmas season. Some of us are already looking forward to it.

Dr. Negley Harte

Review

Our end of March meeting was actually held on 1 April at the Town Hall, due to necessary timetable changes to accommodate our speaker, and then a sudden need to vacate the Pound Arts Centre. The Pound were extremely helpful and re-organised our venue and provided refreshments for us, so all ended well.

Our speaker Duncan Hames, M.P. gave us a very interesting insight into his first ten months as an M.P. and the intricacies of life at the Palace of Westminster. As with any new job, he had to learn the ropes. There is a very well established parliamentary etiquette, but this was complicated by the establishment of the coalition.

We were advised that Duncan is to marry later in the year. We offer both him and his fiancée our congratulations and very good wishes for the future.

Pat Whalley



On the 15th April Lord Methuen came to give a lecture to the Civic Society on the work of the House of Lords. It was a companion piece to the lecture we had heard two weeks earlier from Duncan Hames, our new M.P. on his first ten months' experience of the work of the House of Commons. Lord Methuen is one of the 90-odd hereditary peers retained in the House of Lords, not as one of the 'elected hereditaries' but as one of the members who held office as a deputy speaker of the Lords.

Lord Methuen explained that he became a member of the House of Lords fortuitously in 1994 when his elder brother, the 6th Lord Methuen, died young, and he inherited the peerage just at the moment when he was retiring as an engineer working for Rolls Royce. His late brother, John, was a Corsham town councillor and very well known in the town. Robert, the 7th and present Lord Methuen, was happy to stay in Derbyshire. His heir, his cousin James Methuen-Campbell, took over Corsham Court and the estate. Lord Methuen became an active member of the House of Lords. 'I expect they were glad to have an engineer in the House', I said; 'there are three others', he replied modestly.

In his quiet, direct and unpretentious way, Lord Methuen explained the composition of the House of Lords, its manner of working, what it did and the extent to which it was useful. He was reluctant to be drawn into controversy about its future composition. His sensible, no-nonsense, careful and considered answers to questions were much appreciated by members of the Society.

The Civic Society had offered to put him up at the splendidly-renovated Methuen Arms, but he and his cousin James thought it would be odd if he did not stay in his usual room at the Court. The Society thought his visit was a great success.

Dr. Negley Harte



There was disappointment that too few members managed to attend the AGM in May. The refreshments were, as usual, excellent. Very many thanks to Joan and her helpers for providing the food and drink. Thank you, also, to those who turned up.

The Corsham School was our venue in June due to a clash at The Pound with Corsham Festival activities. This gave us an opportunity to view some of the paintings and other artistic efforts made by the pupils of the school. Headmaster Martin Williams and his deputy Irene explained the ethos of the school was based on "creativity". It was considered the current education does not give youngsters the skills required to deal with the huge changes that are currently taking place in the world; to quote Alvin Toffler, 1972, "we are living in exponential times". Personal confidence, independence and creativity are the watch words around which schooling takes place. With the aim of improving the education of local youngsters the school became a Visual Arts College in 2003, gaining High Performing status in 2006.

In the top Value Added results of 2010 the school was the top-performing, state-funded, mixed comprehensive school in the country, 14th overall. This year it gained Academy status allowing it to be independent of the local council and giving it many freedoms.

Martin also became an OFSTED inspector to better understand how OFSTED operates. He was full of enthusiasm and very pleased and proud with the success of Corsham School. It has both a national and international reputation.

Jane Browning

Corsham Almshouses' bell rung for 10th Anniversary Celebrations



Shortly before 9.00pm on 16th June, 2011, Richard Tonge, Clerk to the Trustees and himself a Trustee, rang the bell from the turreted Almshouses' belfry in celebration of 10 Years of excellent service by the Volunteer Guides after the restoration of the buildings handed back to the Trustees in 2001.

Earlier in the evening over 30 Trustees, Volunteers and guests assembled for a drinks reception (unfortunately not on the lawn outside because of the uncertain weather) whilst enjoying the keyboard piano playing of Sue Coates of Opera Sulis and Stonar School. The guests included those who played a major part in the life of the Almshouses in the past: John and Anne Lock, and Mrs Nancy Burrowes, wife of Dr. Burrowes who was sadly absent through illness-both former Wardens of the Almshouses- and Mrs Christine Reid. A special guest was Jayne England, occupier of Almshouse Number 1, who generously plies Volunteer Guides with tea and coffee when on duty.

All then adjourned to the Schoolroom to enjoy a delicious buffet before Peter King, Chairman of Volunteers, cut the celebration cake made by Mrs. G. Hall. Howard Vaile read out a remarkable e-mail received from a former resident of the Master's House, Mr. Peter Lindsay, now living in Edinburgh. On the very day of the celebrations (having learnt that the bell was to be rung) he contacted Howard. with his memory, as a child of five, ringing the school bell with his father to celebrate the news of the end of the Second World War. On that occasion he remembers that the rope was broken and the bell had to be swung by hand – coincidentally the rope broke again on this recent peel too!

Peter King then introduced Guy Hungerford who addressed everyone from the celebrated pulpit. Guy focused on the turbulent times of the Civil War and the Restoration, telling something of the life of our remarkable foundress and Guy's ancestress, Lady Margaret Hungerford, copies of whose portraits appropriately look down from over the huge fireplace. Afterwards, Volunteer Ron Smith gave a warm vote of thanks to Guy and those who had played a particular part in the arrangements for the evening, everyone agreeing that it had been a most enjoyable occasion.

Finally, just a reminder that details of the Almshouses, with opening times, are posted on our website, whilst Ron Smith (01249 701255) would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join us as a Volunteer Guide.

Peter King. Chairman Volunteer Guides



HERITAGE OPEN DAYS: 8 -11 September 2011

Programme of Events– all organised by Corsham Civic Society

Corsham Cellars, Gastard

Numbers limited to 8 per tour

Thursday 8 September at 11 00 & 14 30

Friday 9 September at 11 00

A rare opportunity for a **guided tour** of a unique underground site now used by Octavian Vaults for storing fine wines. The site was first quarried in 1868 and extensively mined for Bath stone until 1934. During World War 2 it was used by the War Office for large scale storage of ordnance.

Rudloe Stoneworks, Potley Lane, Corsham

Numbers limited to 30 per tour

Thursday 8 September at 14 00

Friday 9 September at 1200

A **guided tour** of the factory and production area of this small Bath Stone firm specialising in using natural and cast stone to provide high quality stone fireplaces

Historical Walk around Corsham

Numbers limited to 25 per walk

Friday 9 September at 14 30

Saturday 10 September at 14 30

A **guided walk** (about 1 hour) around the historic centre of Corsham, led by **Dr Negley Harte**, Emeritus Senior Lecturer at UCL and Chair of Corsham History Group. His special interest in textiles and the origins of industrialisation, and his ongoing research into the early history of Corsham and its buildings, make Dr Harte an eminently well qualified guide to Corsham's heritage, based on working cloth and stone. Meeting point is Church Square, next to St Barts Church.

Illustrated Talk: 'The ABC of the GWR'

Numbers limited to 120

Friday 9 September at 19 30

Venue: Corsham Town Hall

This special HODS talk by Michael Rumsey, chair of Corsham Civic Society, looks at our railway heritage in a new way. **A** is for Reverend Awdry (born 1911), author of Thomas the Tank Engine books. **B** is for Brunel, Bath and the Box Tunnel (located close to Awdry's boyhood home in Box).

C is for Corsham and Chippenham and their links to the story of **G**od's **W**onderful **R**ailway - the **G**reat **W**estern Railway.

Visit to Chapel Plaister Parish Church, Box

No booking or limit on numbers

Saturday 10 September 14 00 - 16 00

A special Saturday afternoon opening (with volunteer guides) of this tiny hill top chapel and hospice, once used by medieval pilgrims travelling between Malmesbury and Glastonbury. After other uses (including as an inn and a store), it was restored and re-dedicated for Anglican worship in the 1880s.

NOTE: There is no charge for any of these HODS events, but **booking is required where numbers are limited**. Tickets are to be collected, by personal application, from Corsham Heritage and Information Centre **from 10 am on Saturday 20 August**

Enquiries: Sally Fletcher, HODS Organiser - 01249 713 048 or sally.fletcher@talktalk.net

John Hanning Speke 1827 -1864

On the edge of a field by a dry stone wall on the Neston estate is an epitaph to John Hanning Speke. He was among the greatest British explorers of the Victorian era, whose greatest achievement was the discovery of the source of the White Nile - the holy grail of Victorian exploration. Speke died in mysterious circumstances whilst shooting partridge on the Neston estate, at the age of 37, the day prior to a debate with Sir Richard Burton at the Royal Mineral Water Hospital Bath organised by the Royal Geographical Society.

John Hanning Speke was born on 4 May 1827 in Bideford, Devon. He served with the Bengal Native Infantry from 1844-1854. He obviously had a love of adventure as, aged 27, he joined an ill-fated expedition to Zanzibar led by Richard Francis Burton (1821-1890) and explored the Wadi Nogal region in Somaliland. In 1855, they were both badly wounded when Issa warriors attacked Burton's camp, at Berbera, on the Somali coast. Speke returned to England to recover and then volunteered for the Crimea, serving with a regiment of Turks.



HERE
THE DISTINGUISHED AND ENTERPRISING
AFRICAN EXPLORER
CAP^T. JOHN HANNING SPEKE
LOST HIS LIFE
BY THE ACCIDENTAL EXPLOSION
OF HIS GUN.
SEPT 15TH 1864.



Speke accompanied Burton's 1856-1859 expedition across Central Africa. They were looking for the large lakes thought to exist in the continent and were also hopeful of identifying the source of the Nile. Both men suffered from tropical illnesses, Speke also became temporarily blind. They were the first Europeans to discover Lake Tanganika in 1858, but then Burton contracted malaria and had to turn back. Speke carried on alone and on 3 August 1858 discovered what he named Lake Victoria in honour of the Queen, later proved to be the source of the Nile. Much of the expedition's survey equipment had been lost at this point and so vital questions about the height and extent of the lake could not be answered.

It was understood Burton and Speke had an understanding they would announce their findings together to the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), but when Speke returned to England before Burton, on 8 May 1859 he made their trip famous in a speech to the RGS where he claimed to have discovered the source of the Nile. Burton returned on 21 May, and was angered by Speke's precipitous announcements. A further rift was caused when Speke was chosen to lead a subsequent expedition without Burton. The two presented joint papers concerning the expedition to the RGS on 13 June 1859.

The Royal Geographical Society, which had sponsored the expedition, honoured Speke for his exploits and commissioned a second expedition in 1860 to resolve the dispute. Speke and Captain James Augustus Grant mapped a portion of Lake Victoria. In July 1862, Speke, unaccompanied by Grant, found the Nile's exit from the lake and named it Ripon Falls. The party then tried to follow the river's course, but an outbreak of tribal warfare required them to change their route.

Speke later returned to lead his own expedition, 1860-3, accompanied by James Grant. They confirmed that Lake Victoria is the chief reservoir of the Nile, Speke sending a celebrated telegram to London: "The Nile is settled." On his return to England, Speke was greeted with enthusiasm and published 'Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile' (1863). Controversy over the question was kept alive for another decade, largely because of Burton's vigorous opposition. Burton supposed the Tanganyika was the Nile reservoir, and that Victoria was a seasonal collection of lakes or lagoons with no outlet. Henry Morton Stanley (1841-1904) circumnavigated Lake Victoria in 1875 and verified Speke's claim.

Controversy stayed with Speke. A public debate in Bath was to be held to discuss the issue of the source of the Nile, chaired by Sir Roderick Murchison, an extremely distinguished geologist. Speke was staying at Neston Park, home of his cousin George Fuller. The day before the debate, Speke went partridge shooting with his cousin. While climbing over a stone wall his gun discharged and he was killed. For decades it was unclear whether this was a tragic accident or whether Speke took his own life.

It appears that Speke's relatives destroyed his diaries and many letters. Their descendants discouraged any attempt to investigate the explorer's life. So much so that efforts to research and gather sufficient material for a book were to no avail.

Mount Speke in the Ruwenzori Range, Uganda was named in honour of John Speke, as an early European explorer of this region.

Speke was buried in Dowlish Wake, Somerset, the ancestral home of the Speke family.

The film *Mountains of the Moon* (1990) (starring Scottish actor Iain Glen as Speke) related the story of the Burton-Speke controversy, portrayed as having been unjustifiably incited by Speke's publisher to stimulate book sales. Speke's suicide is presented as the result of his learning the truth of this betrayal of his trust. It also hints at a sexual intimacy between Burton and Speke, vaguely portraying Speke as a closeted homosexual. This was based on the William Harrison novel *Burton and Speke*, which explicitly portrays Speke as homosexual and Burton as rampantly heterosexual.

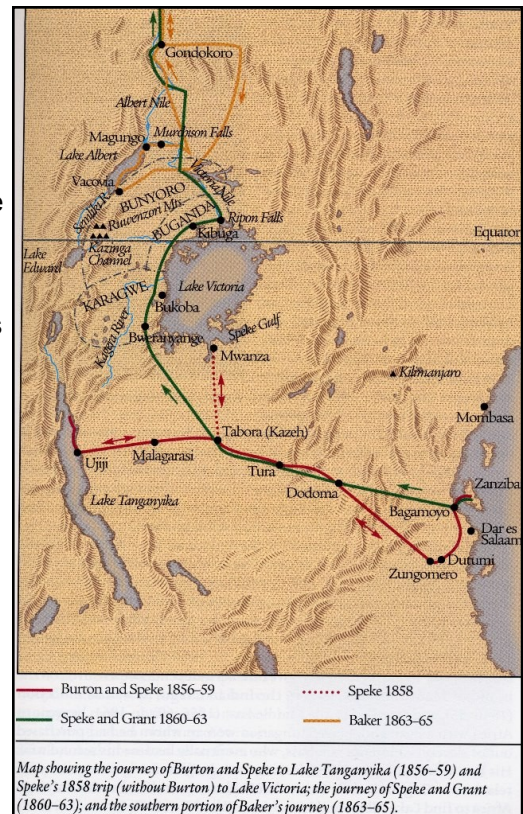
In what is the only full-length biography of Speke, Alexander Maitland set out on an exploration of his own - of Speke the man, and his demise. First published in 1971, Maitland's biography remains one of the most important books about Victorian exploration.

The memorial is at Grid reference ST 842674.

Sources:

<http://bookhugger.co.uk/2010/02/alexander-maitland-on-speke-and-the-discovery-of-the-source-of-the-nile/>
<http://burtoniana.org/speke/index.html>
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/speke_john_hanning.shtml

Jane Browning



Limewashing

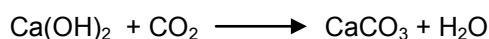
Limewash is slaked lime or calcium hydroxide, $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2$. It is made by heating limestone, CaCO_3 , in a lime kiln to produce quicklime, CaO . This is then slaked by adding some water to produce the slaked lime. We bought the calcium hydroxide as lime putty from Potmollen Paints of Warminster. It has the consistency of cream cheese and is diluted down to the consistency of single cream for use. The lime putty came with linseed oil added so that the covering would be more water repellent. This caused some problems when adding the colour.

We applied to the Council for planning permission to carry out the work. We needed to repair a patch of render that had come off and then to limewash the whole of the front of the house in the correct colour. We were asked to prepare samples both of the render and the limewash colour. Elizabeth worked on the render technique and made up a mixture of 8 parts sand, 2 parts lime, 2 parts stone dust and 1 part hair. Small stones were added to the top coat to give an appropriate rough finish. When the Conservation Officer came to see the samples she chose the roughest of the textures that Elizabeth had produced. I had worked on the colour of the limewash and had used a measuring jug and standard teaspoons to add different amounts of iron II sulphate to a fixed volume limewash. The Conservation Officer chose a colour in the middle of the range that I had produced. To make this, 3 standard cups (750ml) of crystals were added to 10 litres of limewash. It is hoped that this will weather down to the same colour as the Flemish Weavers' Cottages.

When limewash, calcium hydroxide, is exposed to the air it slowly reacts with carbon dioxide to produce calcium carbonate.



Work in progress

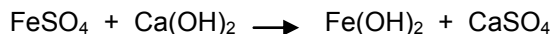


In effect it has returned to the original limestone from which it came. This is very insoluble and so produces a coating that will only weather away over a long period of time.

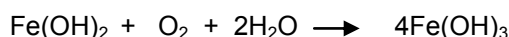
For the colour we added pale green iron II sulphate crystals. At first I bought a kilogram of these from the Highgate School Chemistry Department but then discovered that commercial moss killer is the same chemical and is much cheaper so I bought it from Whitehall Garden Centre.

We found that the added linseed oil reduced the solubility of the iron II sulphate in the limewash and so made it very hard to mix in properly. Fortunately we had one tub of lime putty without the added linseed oil and so were able to make up a small amount of limewash from this to get all the crystals dissolved. We could then add the other limewash to make up the correct quantity. We wetted the walls then applied the limewash with the brush from a dustpan and brush set. It had natural bristles which gradually wore down. The six coats of limewash wore out two brushes.

The iron II sulphate at first reacts with the calcium hydroxide to produce iron II hydroxide.

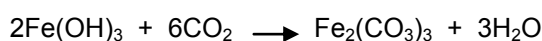


This produces a dreadful dark green/grey colour that looks like slimy mud and that was the colour that appeared on the walls when first brushed on. You can imagine that that produced a few comments from passers-by! Within a few minutes the iron II hydroxide is oxidised by the air to produce bright orange iron III hydroxide. Again there were plenty of comments!



As the limewash dries the white colour predominates and the orange colour tones down to a relatively pale yellow.

Over a period of time the iron III hydroxide also reacts with carbon dioxide in the air to produce iron III carbonate. However, the yellow colour is unchanged.



It had been decided that we would limewash the window surrounds and Celia James (who helped us with the work) had the idea of using a paler colour on these. We used 2 cups of iron II sulphate crystals (500ml) to 10 litres of limewash. This gave a colour which is similar to that of the natural stone.

These chemical processes require damp conditions so it is usual to limewash in the spring or autumn. We chose to do the work in April 2010 but it was unseasonably dry and warm so we had to do a lot of wetting with a garden spray to allow the render and limewash to dry more slowly.



Parkside after limewashing

We had learnt a lot from the work that had been done to the back of the house ten years earlier. Two coats of limewash had been put on much more thickly and this had not weathered well. We hope that six thinner coats will do better. Ideally we would have allowed more time between coats but we had a time restraint because of the scaffolding. We found it necessary to do a whole coat at one time and from one batch of limewash otherwise the result was patchy and lines could be seen where different mixes joined.

Humphrey Barnikel

HAINE & CORRY - Builders Merchants, Corsham & Gloucester

Last year, one of our members was offered a cast iron toilet cistern, yes, a toilet cistern, of the old fashioned variety, with the tank at the top and a long pull chain. What intrigued us was the engraved name on it 'Haine & Corry'. I remembered this firm being in Corsham, but knew very little about them. However a chat with the locals, and a bit of research revealed the following: -

The firm was listed in the Builders Plumbers and Decorators Merchants Catalogue No 55 " Gloucester, Haine and Corry, 1956". This was apparently a very substantial publication, being described as "Hardback red cloth covered boards, gilt lettering on front cover. Hundreds of illustrations, with photos of showrooms at Corsham and Abingdon depots".

The firm sold a great variety of goods: - heating and cooking appliances, sanitary ware, bathrooms and kitchens, plumbing and heating, decorating materials, tools, builders ironmongery, metal windows, glass, heavy goods, agricultural equipment, soil pipes, chimney pots, doors, plaster board, sliding doors, hinges handles, locks, builders tools, paint brushes, mirrors, baths, urinals, cookers, Baxi, stoves etc.

The firm opened the first builders merchants business in Corsham at the bottom of South Street, in the late 1940's. The Manager was a Mr Fletcher, who worked there from 1960 – 1972. His secretary was called Joy. It is believed that the business in Corsham closed about 1974. Their customer-base covered a wide area of Wiltshire, including Malmesbury, Calne and Chippenham. They did not manufacture their own goods, but bought in the stock which they then stamped with the firm's name. This, presumably, accounts for the engraved name on this particular toilet cistern.

Regrettably, but unsurprisingly, we have been unable to find a home for this item, no longer a top of the range piece of equipment, it will disappear into the annals of our industrial past.

Pat Whalley

Book Review: Corsham Memories from 1910

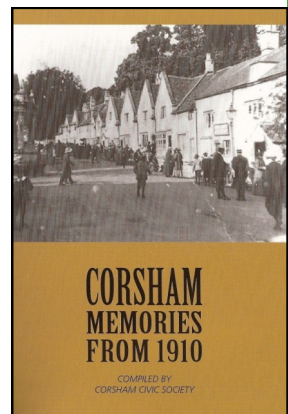
Our evening with Lord Methuen in April was chosen as the launch date for the Civic Society's latest book *Corsham Memories from 1910*. Civic Society stalwart Pat Whalley collated the stories with great dedication over a twelve month period.

This is a collection of memories of people who were born in Corsham between 1910 and 1950 and, as the Chairman of the Society says in the Foreword, it is all about history. Since 1910 there have been 4 monarchs, 2 world wars, the rise and fall of dictators such as Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, and other notables such as Churchill and Lloyd George. The second World War had a huge impact on the town due to the nature of the rock beneath Corsham. Underground factories and depots were established in the old mines by the War Ministry with an attendant influx of servicemen and workers.

Other recollections include Jack Snell, the blacksmith making hoops and crooks for the boys; skating on the lake in winter, though Lord Methuen was careful to ensure the ice was thick enough and the driving of cows from Pound Mead to Hartham Lane via Station Road, the High Street and Priory Street.

Lord Methuen was presented with the first copy of the book. It is on sale at the Corsham Bookshop, Corsham Heritage Centre, and Barnett Brothers newsagents, all on the High Street, and is priced at £9.99. All proceeds will go to Civic Society funds.

Jane Browning



Rudloe Manor

Rudloe Manor is a late 17th century manor house overlooking the beautiful Bybrook valley, surrounded by ancillary buildings including a Grade II listed barn. The house was part of a larger Ministry of Defence site which was vacated in 1998. The house has remained vacant. The current owners have drawn up a residential scheme with enabling development and the proposals are awaiting planning approval.

Since the MOD left the Rudloe Manor site, the manor itself is sadly in a bad state of disrepair. The following two photos were taken in April this year to show the detail of the ceiling of the hall. The Manor is now on English Heritage's *Heritage at Risk Register*, that is, suffering from neglect, decay or inappropriate change. Rudloe Manor's condition is described as "poor".



Photos by John Hancock

Civic Day Photographic competition

The Civic Society held a photographic competition as part of the celebrations of Civic Day, 25th June 2011.

The winner of the adult section was Richard Schofield with his photograph "East Façade of St. Bartholomew's Church with teasels". Jessica Barnes was second with her photograph of The Sign of the Angel in Lacock and Michael Woodberry's photograph of the façade of Lacock Abbey came third.

In the children's section there were only two entries, Adam and Matthew Sellens of St. Patrick's School. Fortunately both were of a high standard and drew praise for their compositions from the judges. Certificates and their framed photographs were presented to Adam and Matthew on 8 July at the school's Golden Assembly.

In all only ten entries were received - too few to create a 2012 Corsham Area Calendar. However, it is an aim we are still investigating and continue to hope it may be possible to bring our original aim to fruition.

Thanks go to judges Joe Macneilage and Alan Macrae who judged the entries professionally, giving guidance as to how each entry could have been improved by taking it at a slightly different angle or patiently waiting for a cloud to blow across the right spot in the sky. They were ably assisted by Civic Society President Anne Lock.

2011 PROGRAMME

Jan 14th	7.30pm	New Year Social Gathering at Town Hall. £5 includes refreshments
Feb 9th	7.30pm	Dinner at The Methuen Arms
Feb 25th	7.30pm	“The Archaeology of Wiltshire” <i>Talk by David Dawson, Director of the Wiltshire Heritage Museum in Devizes.</i>
Apr 1st	7.30pm	“My first ten months as an MP” <i>Talk by Duncan Hames, MP for the new constituency of Chippenham.</i>
Apr 15th	7.30pm	“The work of the House of Lords”. <i>Talk by Lord Methuen who lives in Derbyshire and plays a prominent part as one of the remaining hereditary peers in the House of Lords.</i>
May 13th	7pm for 7.15 pm	AGM at Town Hall.
June 24th	7.30pm	“The Aims of Corsham School” <i>Talk by Martin Williams, Headmaster of Corsham School.</i>
Jul 22nd	6.30pm	“The History of Hartham Park”. <i>Meet in the foyer at Hartham Park. Includes a visit to the Sticke Tennis Court and Hartham Chapel. Allan Bosley, Chairman of Corsham Town Council will lead. He is long associated with Hartham Park and its business park.</i>
Aug 6th	4-6.30pm	Members’ Garden Party (dependent on fine weather) £3 includes cream tea.
Sept 23rd	7.30pm	“Some Interesting buildings in and around Corsham”. <i>Talk by Pamela Slocombe, organiser of the Wiltshire Buildings Record.</i>
Oct 28th	7.30pm	“West Country Carriers and Stage Coaches before and after Turnpiking, 1680-1840” <i>Talk by Dorian Gerhold, principal Clerk of the House of Commons and author of several important works on the history of the coaching and carrying trades, as well as on Putney and Westminster Hall.</i>
Nov 25th	7.30pm	“The Churches of Wiltshire”. <i>Talk by Michael Rumsey, retired headmaster and Chairman of the Corsham Civic Society.</i>
Dec. 8th	7.30pm	An opportunity to see the premises used by the Bath Spa Graduate Centre at Corsham Court.

All meetings to be held at the Pound Arts Centre, 01249 701628, unless otherwise stated.

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 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.

Corsham Civic Society
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