Corsham Spotlight

Magazine of the Corsham Civic Society
http://www.corshamcivicsociety.co.uk

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*Contributions to **Spotlight** are very welcome. Please contact the editor at:*
garchajujar@gmail.com







The Corsham Street Fair September 2024 created plenty of activity in the Town Centre where children and adults enjoyed a wide range of stalls selling local produce, crafts, and live music. There was great food and drink as well as other items offered by the independent shops, pubs, cafes and restaurants and as always, all day FREE parking.

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From the Chair

We are now in December, where has the year gone? As a child I was told by my grandparents that time flies when you're older, I believe them now!

At our last meeting of 2024 in the Pound Arts Centre before the start of John Tucker's talk on Monet's garden, I had the privilege to present a framed watercolour of the High Street to Anne Lock, our president for the last 16 years and a member for so many more.

The watercolour's title is 'Corsham High Street in Summer' and was painted by Juliet Greaves. It's a delightful picture and I'm sure Anne will be able to find a wall space to display it. We are very grateful for everything she has done for the Society over the years.

The Executive Committee also said farewell to John Maloney who has retired from being a committee member as well as being responsible for overseeing planning applications made to the local authority. We thank John for all his hard work over the years as Spotlight editor, chairman and committee member.

It only remains for me to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and may the New Year bring good health and happiness to all.

Michael Rumsey

HELP! Your Society Needs You

Your committee works hard to bring you interesting talks, social events, and tries to keep an eye on what is happening in the area, such as planning applications, what is being done in the town to make it attractive to visitors and how we can join in with those events to promote the town. But all this takes time and effort and the committee would appreciate some help.

Would you please consider taking on one of these roles? It will not involve regular attendance at committee meetings, but let me explain:

Social Organiser: We have three events a year, a New Year Lunch in February, the AGM Wine and Nibbles in May, and a Garden Party in August. Could you help with, booking, collating lists, buying provisions, and attending the event to ensure all goes well?

Planning Watchdog: We used to have committee meetings to consider all local planning applications, but now it has all gone online, so we need someone to regularly watch these applications, and advise the Executive Committee when a development may deliver a problem in the local area i.e., overdevelopment of a site, traffic problems, parking availability, landscaping, overwhelming schools/doctors etc. If you are interested in how the town and surrounding area is developing, then this is might be the task for you!

Reviewer: Spotlight magazine is an important route by which we promote the Society and what it does, so a short review of the events we hold helps to demonstrate the widespread topics we can cover. It would be nice if someone would undertake this task. It would entail coming to each meeting or event, and afterwards writing a short piece on how it was received. This would then be forwarded to the Spotlight editor, for inclusion next time.

For each of these jobs, you would be advised and supported by the committee, and we would be most grateful for your assistance. If you feel you can help, please contact our chairman or any committee member for further information. Thank you.

Pat Whalley

85 Years Ago, on Christmas Day

85 years ago, on Christmas Day 1939, King George VI gave his annual Christmas broadcast to the Nation and the Empire. During that broadcast he quoted a poem that had been sent to his wife that year, it read:

And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".

And he replied, "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than the know way".

These lines were written by Minnie Louise Haskins, born in May 1875 in Oldland, on the outskirts of Bristol, the daughter of a wealthy sanitary glazed pipe manufacturer. She later taught at the London School of Economics and died in 1957.

In 1912 she wrote the poem, a longer version is available on the internet, and this was published in the 1930s. It was read by a friend of Queen Elizabeth who passed it on to her.



The photograph above shows Miss Haskins on her 80th birthday in May 1955, with the chairman and members of the Warmley Urban District Council holding a suitable bouquet of flowers to befit the occasion.

If we read that poem today it still gives us all hope for the future.

Michael Rumsey

Christmas Day 1949

I was sent to bed early on Christmas Eve that year and the next morning, on the 25th, a very special present lay in wait for me on the table from my parents.

To my surprise and delight it happened to be my first electric train set, a Hornby Dublo engine and two coaches. The engine was a LNER A4 Pacific no. 4498 'Sir Nigel Gresley'. The set cost £7.10s.0d which today would be approx.: £340. My Father once told me that it cost him two and half week's wages, certainly a great deal of money in those days.

It started off my interest in model railways which continues today and will be with me for the rest of my life. Larry St. Croix kindly took the photograph below which shows just a small part of the collection with the original engine and coaches in pride of place.

Michael Rumsey



Sheep Sculpture in Corsham

A Wiltshire town's woollen industry heritage is being marked with a distinctive statue of a sheep.

The bronze-coloured Cotswold Sheep sculpture created by Jonathan Sanders is located at Corsham's Cross Keys junction on the A4 and is a tribute to the area's history as a wool town and links to the woollen industry.

Larry St Croix





The Lost Stegosaurus

An item on local TV back in July, which was promoting the new Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, mentioned the 1874 discovery of the remains of a stegosaurus in a clay pit belonging to the Swindon Brick and Tile Co., these fossils are now housed in the Natural History Museum in London.

This reminded me of a small item in 'Corsham Facts and Folklore' published in 2018, of the discovery in the Corsham countryside, many years ago, of a piece of vertebrae believed to belong to a stegosaurus, details of which were recorded for the Devizes Museum Journal.

Unfortunately, after contact with Devizes Museum, and a perusal of their journals, we have been unable to locate the article or the item itself. It seems the stegosaurus bone has vanished into the dust. However, Elaine Arthurs, the Collections and Exhibitions officer at Swindon Museum kindly shared some additional information with us, reported here:

"Stegosaurs were land dwelling herbivore animals, which only ate plants.

"They were later named Dacentrurus (dah-sen-troo-russ) meaning 'pointed tail'. Dacentrurus was about eight metres long and had a row of protective spikes and plates upon its back. It also had a spikey tale that could swipe predators if they came too close. It roamed the earth in the late Jurassic period, about 150 – 154 million years ago.

"The Swindon Stegosaurus is very special as it was the first one ever discovered. Why was a land-living dinosaur found in the middle of a marine environment? It is likely that the stegosaurus was washed out to sea, the body settled on the seabed and then became fossilised within the Kimmeridge clay."

So how did a stegosaurus get to Corsham? They must have been roaming far and wide! Readers may find this to be a negative report, but you never know, you may have this come up in a quiz one day!

Pat Whalley

More information about the Swindon Stegosaurus can be found on the Natural History Museum's website: https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/swindon-stegosaur.html



Swindon Stegosaurus: located in Natural History Museum

Corsham Street Fair 2024 – Photos by Larry St Croix













Corsham Print

Corsham Print have provided The Corsham Civic Society an excellent, professional, and friendly service for many years towards producing copies of the Civic Society Spotlight Magazine. The webmaster for the Civic Society is Chris Perry who is also the Commercial Director for Corsham Print with over 40 years of experience in the print industry.

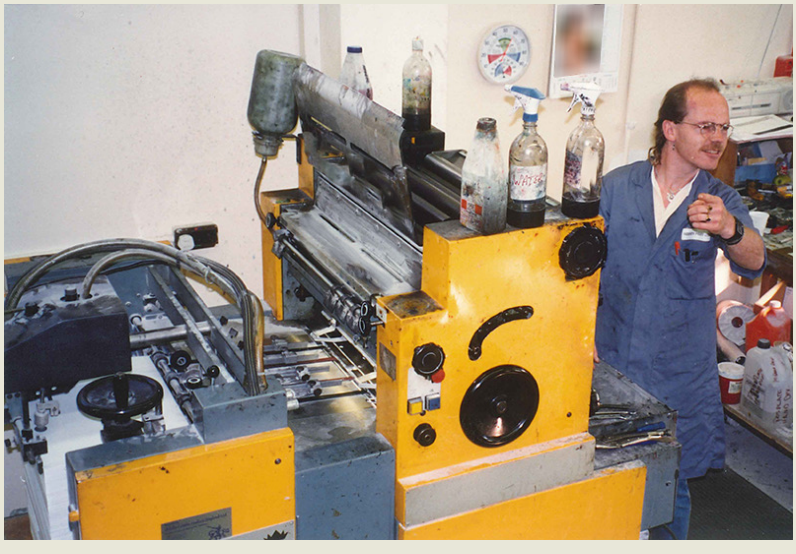
The business was founded in 1978 as Addkey Print by Doug Perry and Ken Wall, who had both previously worked for The Print Industry Training Board, and their respective partners Daphne and Angela. Originally set up to sell office calculators, (hence the name Add Key) the demand for print was high and they decide to focus on this.

Their first premises was in Alexander Terrace, behind what was the launderette, overlooking the Recreation Ground. In 1985, they bought the former United Reform Church in the centre of town which is now Grounded (bar restaurant).

In the late 80s, they bought the Westinghouse plant Print Department and moved production to Chippenham for a few years, but the head office remained in the Precinct Church, Corsham. By the mid-90s everything was once again operating from the church in Corsham.



Founders: Doug Perry and Ken Wall



Printing machine: Photo taken at old Westinghouse facility

In 2001, Doug and Daphne retired, and the new directors Chris Perry and David Kilmurray changed the name of the business to Corsham Print and moved to The Pickwick Workshops, just off the A4 (formally Town Council yard). The Church was sold to Bill Hall and was converted into a venue and the graveyard opened as we see it today.

Chris and David eventually found a permanent home for the business on Leafield Industrial Estate in 2006 and this is where they still are today.



Leafield site opening: Chris Perry (left) opens facility alongside Ian Storey



Christmas 2010: Corsham Print staff celebrate festive period with a cool customer

They are proud to have been part of the local community for over 40 years and have supported various organisations and events over the years including the football and cricket clubs, the annual 10K, and the sadly never repeated Corsham Beer Festival in the 90s, amongst others.

The directors are advocates for sustainable communities and encourage local trade whenever possible. As a customer-focused printing company, they have helped countless clients in the South West to succeed with their print, design, and sign solutions. This helps customers focus on running their own operations rather than worrying about the creative process.

The team members have an unparalleled set of skills developed over years spent working exclusively within the printing industry which allows them to quickly assess their client's objectives, as well as provide concepts that resonate with their goals – ultimately providing the perfect creative solution needed for success.

In addition, Corsham Print are proud to be a sustainable print company that manufactures nearly everything from their base in Wiltshire.

Eco-Print options help you take responsibility

Corsham Print believe that we all must take action to help the climate emergency. The printing industry has, for a long time, had a stigma surrounding it when it comes to its environmental impact. However, the print and paper industry has been working for decades to protect the environment with various eco-print options:

- Vegetable oil-based inks and toners
- Low energy production and use of LED drying
- FSC certification of paper
- Carbon capture with Woodland Trust and World Land Trust

Despite these initiatives, there are still many myths about print and paper that cause major issues within the industry. Misconceptions are further reinforced by financial organisations, utility companies, and many other service providers as they increasingly encourage their customers to switch to paperless bills and statements.

From Pixels to Paper: The Fascinating Journey of the Print Job

Ever wondered how your digital designs transform into those eye-catching brochures, magazines (including Corsham Civic Society Spotlight Magazine), and business cards in your hands? The journey of a print job is a fascinating one, filled with high-tech tools and meticulous human expertise. The key stages are:

Stage 1: Prepping for Print (Prepress)

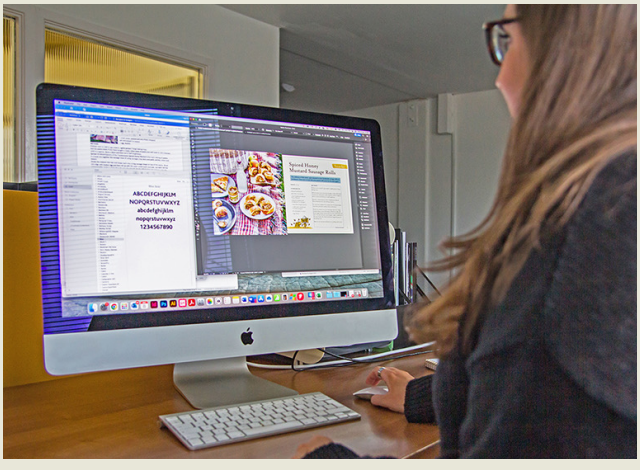
Design and File Creation: The magic begins with vision! Graphic designers weave text, images, and branding elements using powerful software like InDesign, Photoshop, or Illustrator.

Proofreading: A keen eye is crucial! Meticulous proofreading ensures the design is flawless, free from typos, grammatical errors, and visual inconsistencies.

File Conversion and Optimisation: Getting ready for the press! Files are converted to compatible formats, fonts are outlined, and high-resolution images are prepped to ensure stunning results.

Colour Management: Accuracy is key! Colour profiles guarantee the desired hues that translate flawlessly from digital to different paper types.

Platemaking: Depending on the chosen printing method (offset, digital, etc.), printing plates are produced. These hold the ink-transferring areas, ready to bring the design to life.



Prepping for print: A graphic designer using a digital editing software to create a document



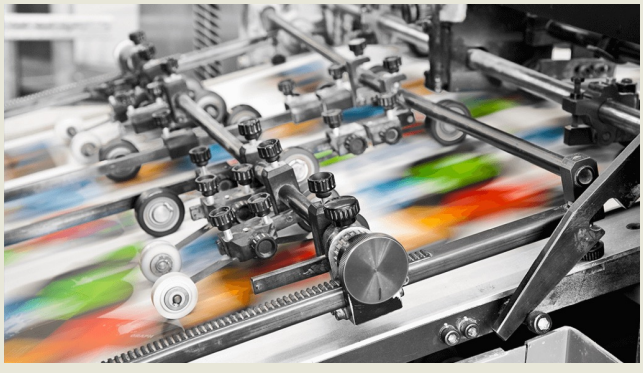
Chris Perry: Overseeing the prepress process at Corsham Print's Leafield site

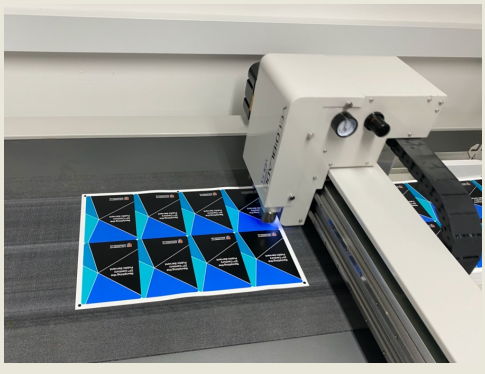
Stage 2: Putting Ink to Paper (Press)

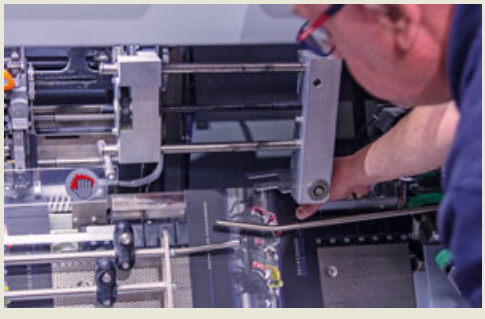
Press Setup and Calibration: Precision matters! The printing press undergoes meticulous calibration using ink volume settings for consistent ink flow, paper feeding, and colour registration.

Printing: The moment of truth! Plates are loaded onto the press, paper sheets are fed through, and vibrant ink dances onto the surface, transforming the digital creation into a tangible reality.

Quality Control: Every detail counts! Trained professionals monitor ink levels, colour accuracy, and paper feeding throughout the process, ensuring the highest quality standards for the print job.







Stage 3: Finishing Touches (Postpress)

Folding and Trimming: Taking shape! Printed sheets are folded, trimmed, and collated into their final form. Brochures get their signature folds, while books undergo intricate binding and page assembly.

Binding and Finishing: Adding the finishing touches! The print job might receive special effects like die-cutting, embossing, lamination, or UV coating for extra visual appeal and durability.

Inspection and Packing: Ready for the world! A final thorough inspection ensures the print job is flawless. Once approved, the creations are carefully packed and prepared for delivery.



So, the next time you read the Corsham Civic Society Spotlight Magazine and admire a beautifully printed design, remember the fascinating journey it took to get there.

From meticulous digital set-up to high-tech printing and expert finishing, the printing process is a testament to human ingenuity and technological prowess. It's a journey that transforms pixels into paper, ideas into reality, and the vision into a tangible masterpiece to hold and cherish.

Larry St Croix

Corsham Stationary

In the 1980s, Daphne Perry, the mother of Chris Perry (Commercial Director of Corsham Print) and grandmother of Aimee, set up a stationery shop at 19 Pickwick Road. The unit had been converted into a shop in the 1950s and had been home to an audio and television shop until the 1970s and a knitting shop before Daphne had the idea to sell personal and business stationery.

This was an extension of her husband Doug's print business, Addkey Print, that was situated in the Precinct Church (now Grounded). One of the most popular services then was faxing documents!

In the late 1990s Doug and Daphne retired and the stationery shop was sold to the Clark family, who operated a chain of stationery shops across the West Country called DAC Stationery. Over the next 20 years, the Clark family ran a very popular business, continuing where Daphne left off.

Meanwhile, Chris and David Kilmurray (Operations Director of Corsham Print) went about the business of building a commercial print business on Leafield Industrial Estate. The two businesses stayed in touch and in 2017 when the Clark family decided to retire, they approached Corsham Print with a view to buying back the business, 20 years after they had sold it.

Corsham Print had grown into one of the most successful commercial printers in the South West and Chris and David thought that a stationery shop would be a great addition and give retail customers access to their print services.

Corsham Stationery was founded with Aimee Perry appointed store manager in charge of running the business alongside retail assistants Sarah, Jo and Siân. Aimee is always introducing new products and services, and always on the lookout for new brands to add to the range.

Supporting the community is very important to Corsham Stationary/Print and they love getting involved with local events and their seasonal competitions are proving to be very popular.



Store front: View of shop on Pickwick Road



Left to right: Sarah retail assistant and store manager Aimee Perry

Corsham Stationery is a trading name of Corsham Print who run a commercial graphic communications business on Leafield Industrial Estate supplying products and services to the whole of the South West.

Larry St Croix



Ben Thomas made Associate Professor at Trinity College, Dublin

Our congratulations go to Ben Thomas who has recently departed from the University of Kent, having secured a post as Associate Professor of Art History at Trinity College, Dublin.

You may remember that Ben is an authority on Renaissance Art who came to speak to us in November 2022 on the subject of 'How to display Art', which was very well received. We wish him well in his new appointment and are sure he will continue to go from strength to strength.

Pat Whalley

Corsham Stone Display

Part of Corsham history is on display showing two trolleys supporting two blocks of quarried stone including a turntable on the corner of Park Lane/Bath Road. The stone quarry at Hartham Park is still worked today.

Roads are cut through the strata of good stone, which typically lie 20 metres below the surface.

The stone is quarried in large blocks from the side face of an underground road using vertical and horizontal cuts two metres deep into the face. This is underground quarrying, not mining!

Formerly, the only way for quarrymen to get to and from work some 20 metres down was by typically 100-odd steep steps cut into the slope.

Recently, quarries have cut wider, higher, lower gradient, drive-in slope shafts giving easy access for quarry staff.

Specialist diesel powered vehicles now bring stone blocks direct to the surface, avoiding the need for cable winches and trolleys.

Larry St Croix





Harrow-Wealdstone Train Crash Anniversary

October 6th was the anniversary of the Harrow-Wealdstone train crash in 1952 in which my father, John, was involved. He was travelling to Scotland in the Scotch Express which bore the brunt of the crash: 112 people died and my father had to have both his legs and his right hand amputated.

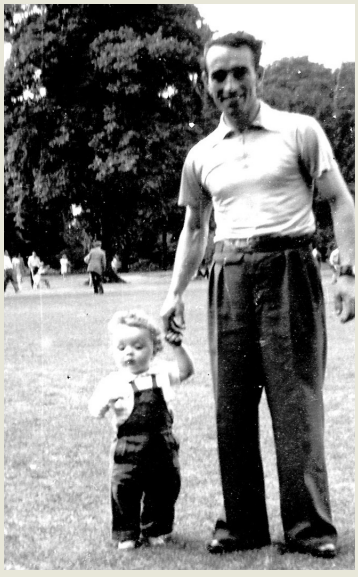
But he survived and having been fitted with artificial limbs learnt to walk and drive again. He was strong and enduring and lived into his 80's. Now that I have degenerative neuropathy and can hardly walk, I can better appreciate what he had to endure.

Virtus et honor!

In the first photo he is holding my hand in Southall Park, West London, in the year, 1951, before the accident.

In the second, in 1953, he is in a wheelchair with my late sister Mary on his lap, me standing beside him and my mother, Catherine, at the back.

My other sisters, Rita and Majella were born later. I don't know where my brother Paul was hiding!





John Maloney

Captain Daniel Clutterbuck of the Royal Hussars

Some of our members might remember the story of one of our own local heroes, Capt. Clutterbuck, who took part in the Charge of the Light Brigade, was injured, but survived and lived at Middlewick House. He died in 1906 and was buried at St Bartholomew's churchyard with his wife Sofia.

In 2009, the Society attempted to find volunteers to help to maintain three of the graves in the churchyard, that of Charles Mayo, Daniel Clutterbuck and Joan Pictor. However, the churchyard was in the process of becoming a wildlife sanctuary, and there were restrictions on what work could be carried out. I am afraid the project fell by the wayside.

However, we are delighted to learn that on the 25th October, the 125th anniversary of the battle, there was a short service to rededicate the grave of Daniel Clutterbuck.

Julian Carosi said: "The ceremony followed the rediscovery and refurbishment of Daniel's grave, and the installation of a marble stone tribute to Daniel provided by the Army to commemorate the part he played in the 8th Kings Royal Irish Hussars during the Battle of Balaklava.

"He was wounded in the right foot by a shell fragment which left him with a limp for the rest of his life."

Thank you to Julian, the Army, the Town Council and St Bart's for enabling this restoration as part of Corsham's story.

Pat Whalley



Reviews

In **June**, we had a most interesting talk on the 'Making of the Kingdom of Wessex', given by David Dawson, Director of the Wiltshire Museum. David showed us the evidence which has been found in North Wiltshire which demonstrates how the Saxons settled in England after the Romans gradually left, and how after the Vikings also challenged the supremacy of the part of the land to be known as Wessex.

It would be a long, hard struggle during which King Alfred (of Alfred the Great fame) would play a decisive part in bringing together the various factions/tribes which spent time warring among themselves to no great advantage. Replica examples of the types of weapons used at the time, and other small finds were shown to add to our understanding of the area at the time.

Our **July** meeting focused on 'The Lady Margaret Hungerford Almshouses', our speaker was Jane Gater, who produced an excellent presentation after being asked to 'stand in' for Lyn Adams, who was unfortunately unable to get to the meeting. For those of us who know the Almshouses quite well, we learned even more of the Hungerford family history, and how they came to Corsham House (Court) during this period of history.

Margaret Hungerford, a Puritan, did much, within the tenets of Puritanism, to help the poor and needy, and her biggest contribution to Corsham, was without doubt, the magnificent edifice we can see daily at the junction between Lacock Rd and Pound Pill, overlooking the cricket field. Her plan to house six ladies who may be in straightened circumstances, was a generous one, and this was enhanced by the presence of a Master, who whilst managing the building and its occupants, also had the charge of teaching up to 10 poor schoolboys, who otherwise would not have the opportunity for a basic education.

It wasn't until 1812 that the Almshouse school ceased to function, education was becoming identified as a necessity for all children, and schools began to be established all over the country. In Corsham, Paul Cobb Methuen donated the Methuen School at South Place in 1816 and so we saw the beginning of the countrywide education system as we now know it. But the Almshouses continued to be home to ladies in need of shelter and with help provided by the Warden (previously known as the Master) and his family.

There were limited cooking facilities at this time, so meals still came from the Warden's kitchen, and the ladies would help with the kitchen garden which then extended and ran parallel to the bottom of Pound Pill. It was not until the 1950s that the Almshouses were renovated to more modern standards, when a kitchen and hot water was installed. So not only was this building one of the first to provide schooling for the poor, but in the 19th century became an example of sheltered housing. It seems that Lady Margaret Hungerford was a very far thinking lady.

In **August**, we held our Garden Party at the Almshouses. The weather was good, even warm, and a very pleasant time was had by all. Thank you to all the bakers and helpers who brought the afternoon together. Numbers were down, but the selection and standard of cake making was outstanding. If you were unable to come, you missed a treat!

In **September**, Edward Barrett, our Vice Chairman, ably filled the absence of our scheduled speaker with a very interesting talk about his Adventures in a Lancaster Bomber during the 1960s.

In 1965, when taking advantage of some leave time from the Army, Edward went globe-trotting and finally found himself at RAF Changi with a need to get himself back to Cyprus and the UK by mid-May. After having no success finding a routine flight home, he heard of a Lancaster bomber making its way back to England from Australia, sponsored by the Historic Aircraft Preservation Society (HAPS) and due to arrive 14th May 1965.

This Lancaster (number NX111) had been built at Longbridge, Birmingham in 1945. In 1962 after a varied life, she ended up in New Caledonia, east of Australia. By mid-1964 the last three Lancasters were withdrawn from service and offered for preservation. NX111 was delivered to HAPS and was restored to an airworthy condition ready for the 12,000-mile flight back home. The crew comprised four ex-servicemen, each with DSO's; two ex-servicemen as radio operator and flight engineer, and the rest were from multiple occupations, but all enthusiasts for this remarkable plane.

This whole journey was a test of ingenuity and resolve. First stop Calcutta, and on to Karachi, then a flight plan was required to over-fly Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. All was well until they entered Syrian air space, when they were accused of being an 'un-identified aircraft'. (The flight plan must have got lost!) They had nine minutes to get out of Damascus air space and over the border, so whilst the radio operator discussed the situation with Damascus, with reception breaking up constantly, they made it!

Landing, at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus on 10th May, this was the end of Edward's Lancaster adventure. He made the rest of his way home by another route. The Lancaster made it to Biggin Hill on 13th May and was grounded soon after. After some changes of ownership, locations, further restoration, and a new name 'Just Jane', she 'landed' at East Kirby at the Lincoln Aviation Heritage Centre, which remains her home.

In **October**, we were hoping to meet Rosie McNamara who was going to tell us about her book on Boxfields, but unfortunately, due to family illness she was unable to come. We hope to catch up with her sometime in the future.

Instead, our chairman, Michael Rumsey, gave us a splendid look at some of the 'Parish Churches of North Wiltshire', and we saw many small village churches that we would never know existed, leave alone seek out, when we are hastily moving along the main roads from A-B. These buildings are fine examples of many styles of architecture, and have charming interiors, wall paintings, rood screens, and still retain their original wooden pews.

Sir Harold Brakspear took a good deal of interest in these local buildings, large and small, and contributed to their wellbeing for all to see. We are very fortunate to have so many good examples to visit in our area. A reminder that Wiltshire has many gems to explore.

Pat Whalley

Obituary – Mervyn Tyte

We are extremely sorry to hear of the death of one of our long-standing members, Mervyn Tyte. Keenly interested in ancient history, any ramble that included a nearby long barrow or intriguing mound was bound to find favour.

As a member of the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, he became involved and contributed to the Wiltshire Biological Records, now the Wiltshire and Swindon BRC, their data now totalling 3,857,500 species.

He was always keenly interested in the growth of Corsham, and to ensure that we did not lose sight of the town's heritage. The countryside and the environment were high on his list.

For those who might remember the 'Over Eighteens group' a social club for young people, held at the Community Centre in the 50/60s, the members got together annually to 'put on a show'.

One year it was the pantomime Aladdin. Mervyn played the part of Genie of the Lamp, there was a script, but apparently not for Mervyn, he did his own thing and brought the house down. The fact that the other actors often did not know what was going on, just meant that you have never seen another 'Aladdin' story like it!

As a sportsman, certainly in his younger days, he enjoyed hockey, tennis and badminton. Another love of his was music, playing the piano and trumpet in his usual exuberant style.

Whilst showing concern for many aspects of life, he was never judgemental, and by retaining a vibrant sense of humour, he certainly kept those around him both amused and positive as they went about their lives.

We send our sincere sympathies to his family.

Pat Whalley

corsham stationery

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Save the Date: Visit to Rudloe Manor House

We are delighted to report that we have received an invitation to visit Rudloe Manor from the owners Jeremy and Sam Sanders. We have a provisional date of Saturday 26th July 2025. But this may be subject to change because of other activities.

But all being well, we are offered escorted tours of the site of this huge restoration, with tours in small groups and afternoon tea, and in our Spring Issue of Spotlight, we shall be asking for numbers who would like to attend this visit to manage catering/travel etc.

Application forms (members only) will be included in the Spring 2025 edition of Spotlight.



Rudloe Manor: Adorned with lights for the festive period
(credit: Tom Cole)

The Foundation of the SAS: Open Meeting 26th September 2025

This is an early notice of a meeting we are to hold in September 2025. I am sure you will want to put the date in your new diaries. We are fortunate to be able to invite the daughter of one of the founders of the SAS (Special Air Service) 'Gentleman Jim Almond' to talk to us about this remarkable story which started in 1941.

Our speaker, Lucy Almonds-Windmill is an ex-regular army officer, and her brother has also served three times with the SAS, so this will be a chance to hear the real inside story of a family's commitment to our country. We shall hold the meeting in the Auditorium at the Pound Arts Centre to allow for a maximum capacity audience.

Please make a note and spread the word.

Pat Whalley

Annual Corsham Civic Society Lunch 2025

The committee are pleased to report that the annual Civic Society lunch next year will be held on Friday, February 28th, 12.30pm for 1pm. The venue again will be at Amore, the Italian restaurant on Pickwick Road opposite to the Mansion House.

The menu is included with this magazine, together with the order form for either two or three courses of your choice. Alexander and his colleagues are looking forward to seeing us on the 28th and we look forward to having an enjoyable meal together.

Please complete the form showing your choices for each course, and return to me with payment, with either cash, cheque (made payable to Corsham Civic Society) or by bank transfer, details which appear below in Membership Matters, this enables Amore to prepare the requisite number of dishes so that service will be prompt.

Membership Matters

We've now come to that time of year when members who pay their subscriptions yearly are invited to renew memberships for 2025. Those paying yearly will find a letter addressed to them stapled to the magazine which informs them of three ways to pay the 2025 subs.

You can pay by cash, by cheque (made payable to the Corsham Civic Society) or by bank transfer. Details are to be found below:

For online banking, our account is with Lloyds Bank Plc.
Sort Code: 30-91-99.
A/C No: 01265754.

Whichever payment choice you make would you be kind enough to ensure to complete the slip at the bottom of the letter and return to me with either cash, cheque or the date you made the bank transfer, the latter helps our treasurer to know where the money has come from.

Thank you in advance for your help in this matter. Good wishes.

N.B. Please note, if you don't find a letter stapled to your magazine about the 2025 subs, don't panic, you are either a Life Member or have already paid your 2025 subscription. Also, if you wish to pay for two years, just double up the subscription amount and that will save me a letter in December 2025.

Michael Rumsey – Membership Secretary

Corsham Station

60 years since Corsham Sation closed and nearly 40 years since the Civic Society's campaign to reopen it began in earnest, led by Anne Lock. It has been a rollercoaster ride with a false dawn in 2002 when funding was secured and then withdrawn.

The latest position is that the Town Council has backed the need for the station, including reserving the site in the Neighbourhood Plan and Wiltshire Council likewise in the Local Plan, with some of the necessary land already in the ownership of Wiltshire Council. A bid for the station under the "Restoring Your Railways" (RYR) programme was put together by Wiltshire Council, sponsored by Michelle Donelan our then MP, and supported by the Corsham Town Team, a group led by the Town Council and including representatives of Corsham Civic Society, Trans Wilts and the MOD, inter alia. The outline business case was submitted in November 2022 and revealed a strong case for reopening with forecast passenger journeys of 478,000 – 573,000 with 1 train per hour (976,000 – 989,000 with 2 trains per hour) – even at the lower level this would put us in the top 1/3 of stations in the country!

One sticking point has been identifying a suitable train service to stop at Corsham (as GWR will not stop the fast trains to London here). On 14th September GWR relaunched (after 23 years) a Bristol to Oxford direct service (i.e. no need to change at Didcot Parkway) as a trial for a period of 3 months with the following services, on Saturdays only:-

Bristol Temple Meads 10.18 am arriving Oxford 13.12 and 15.18 arriving 16.31

Oxford 12.03 arriving Bristol Temple Meads 13.12 and 17.12 arriving 18.23.

Extending this to a daily, hourly service would provide the train to stop at Corsham – so please use this train if you can to prove that demand exists!

Meanwhile Sarah Gibson MP has taken over as the sponsoring MP and confirmed her support for Corsham Station in her maiden speech in the House of Commons, whilst the Department for Transport has recently provided the following update:-

"There is no more money for RYR. All infrastructure projects on our books, RYR and otherwise, will now go into the Transport Review for consideration for other funding. It is part of a wider review and will we assume feed into a Spending Review/Budget".

Accordingly at the time of writing we await the outcome of the budget. The Civic Society continues to be fully involved in the Town Team and we will keep members updated.

Chris Johnson

CORSHAM CIVIC SOCIETY TALKS 2025

All meetings are at the Pound Arts Centre (T: 01249 701628) at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated. Members £2, Non-Members £5. Guests are very welcome. Please be aware that these events are subject to last minute changes beyond the control of the CCS.

24th Jan	Morgyn Davies, Chief Salvage Officer for MOD Retired, **The Loss of HMS Montague off Lundy Island in 1906 & the Formation of the Admiralty Salvage Unit (Bath)**
28th Feb	**Annual Corsham Civic Society Lunch at Amore** Pickwick Road Corsham (application forms enclosed)
28th Mar	John Maloney & Tony Clark on their book **Pickwick, A Place in Time**
25th Apr	Peter Davenport, **Creation of the Batheaston By-pass**
16th May	**AGM** followed by drinks and nibbles at the Town Hall, 7pm start
27th Jun	Jonathon Holt, **The Architectural Follies of Wiltshire**
25th July	Claire Slack of Wiltshire Museum, **Un/Common People: Folk Culture in Wiltshire**
26th Jul	TBC **Visit to Rudloe Manor House** at the invitation of Mr & Mrs Sanders (Members Only)
16th Aug	**Garden Party**
26th Sep	Lorna Almonds-Windmill tells us of her father's involvement in the **Formation of the SAS**
24th Oct	Wendy Reynolds, **Recollections of Ascension Island & St Helena**
28th Nov	David Leonard, **The History of Chapel Plaister**

Please note that the programme may be subject to changes.

For more information email: corshamcivicsociety@gmail.com or see the website: www.corshamcivicsociety.co.uk

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 and 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 historical interest, in Corsham and the surrounding countryside.

Corsham Civic Society, 91 Tellcroft Drive, Corsham, SN13 9JQ, Wiltshire. Registered Charity No: 275321