

Corsham Spotlight

March, 2006

Volume 4, Issue 1

Newsletter of the Corsham Civic Society

Complimentary Copy

Editorial

Welcome to our spring edition of Spotlight. Another busy year ahead of us, and if we manage to accomplish all we propose, then we shall do well.

As always though, the cry has to be that we cannot do it without your help. Our present Chairman, Peter Tapscott intends to stand down as Chairman, after a stint of 3 years in the hot seat; and I would also like a rest from the Secretary's chair, after sitting here for a good 10 years. Eric has resumed full time employment after retiring 'twice', and therefore wants to relinquish the Publicity Officer role – so there are lots of room for change and new ideas to be brought forward. **Please consider whether you might be able to do something to help.** Nominations will be requested a month prior to the AGM - 26 May 2006.

We all are happy to remain on the Executive if that is the members wish, so that continuity will remain, but how we go forward is as much to do with the membership as with the Executive committee.



We are a thriving and respected Society, with much to offer our local community. We don't want to lose our opportunity to play a part in the life of the town and contribute to its future development.

This year (September) we want to take part in the Heritage Open Day Scheme again, even if on a smaller scale than before, but it needs organisation, and 'many hands make light work'. There are also exhibitions, visits, walks and BBQ's to arrange – so please, even if you don't wish to act as a committee member, please offer your time and skills, to perhaps help with one event, even a new one which might be particularly close to your heart. We would be delighted to hear from you.

Read on to get updates on our current projects; and if you are new to the area, and would like to be involved, please get in touch, you will be made very welcome.

Pat Whalley

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE.

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Review

Mrs Margaret Dobson gave our October meeting an extremely interesting overview of the history of Bradford on Avon. Talks such as these always give one the incentive to visit the area to walk about unhindered and take in the architecture and details of buildings we so frequently miss or ignore when going about our busy lives. We have no time to stand and stare it seems, and what a pity that it is so.

In November we welcomed Dr Alan Dodge from Freshford History Society, who reminded us of the 'good' old days of the 18th/19th century and the lot of the village Labourer. Since at that time agriculture was at its peak and the year revolved around the seasons, we were able to recall how village life followed the needs of the farmer - for long hours, very little money, with no need for very much education, and very little time for entertainment. Their houses were little more than hovels; lighting, heating and sanitation was virtually non-existent; people would very hard-pressed to survive in those conditions these days.

December, no meeting.

A busy January, with our New Years Dinner at the Flemish Weaver being very well attended, everyone agreed the food and company were excellent. 38 of us crammed into the Flemish Weaver on the night of Wednesday the 11th of January. Peter was personally congratulated afterwards for the unaccustomed brevity of his Chairman's speech! Our thanks to Jerry and Natalie (Proprietors of the Flemish Weaver) for a truly splendid evening

. Our social gathering at the end of the month was equally enjoyable. Our guests from the Chamber of Commerce and the Corsham Twinning Association were very welcome and we had an opportunity to exchange views about our town and the way in which we would like to see it go forward. Wyndham and Kathy Thomas had assembled a collection of excellent photographs showing our town centre shop fronts on the run-up to this last Christmas. Items relating to the Chamber's Christmas competition figured large in them. Joe James and Eric had produced a CD relating the tale of 'The Lost Valley' which we will be contributing to the exhibition in the Tourist Information Centre in celebration of the works of Isambard Kingdom Brunel – as all of you will surely know, 2006 is the 200th anniversary of his birth. We were also pleased to display some of the 'Burrowes' Papers' depicting the Corsham Poor House – which once occupied the site in our High Street from which ES Electrical now trades.

Mike Stone, Curator of Chippenham Heritage Museum made a welcome return to our meetings, when in February he shared with us some of those things which had been "Made in Chippenham". What a surprising and varied array of items and goods has come out of the town.

2006 marks the 25th anniversary of Corsham's Twinning with the French town of Jargeau.

The CTA are expecting to welcome 110 visitors to Corsham for the annual meeting of representatives of the two communities, and they are seeking the help of the people of Corsham to accommodate some of their guests. The event will be held the weekend of 6 May – 8 May 2006.

Many events are programmed to entertain the visitors, but they need bed, board and food for part of the time. If you feel you might be able to help in any way, please contact George Mills, 4 Mayo Close, Corsham. SN13 9DT. E mail: george@mills1492.fsnet.co.uk

French Market Day – A change of date for your diaries

Saturday 9th September 2006



PEEP AT THE PAST “Down with the demon drink”

Every generation has its alcohol related problems.

In Victorian/ Edwardian times temperance movements emerged with the enthusiasm of religious crusades. Organisations such as the ‘Recabites’ urged Corsham people to “sign the pledge” for a life committed to abstinence.

In 1903 (yes – 1903!) a cinema show at the Town Hall financed the “Good Templars Movement”.

The foundation of the Church of England Temperance Society followed the arrival of a dedicated clergyman, the Rev George Newnham (1806 – 1839). Having retired from his living at Combe Down, Bath (35 years at £30 per annum) he took up residence at The Grove, High St in 1877. A strictly orthodox and outspoken parson every day started with family prayers.

Diarist Herbert Spackman records “3.1.1888: Mr Newnham preached and could not help treading on political grounds He spared no one, but had a hit all round”. On 7.12.1888 Herbert recalls “I went to choir practise at the Methuen Arms in the evening. Mr Newnham went out before ‘Blow the Gentle Gales” (Literally “Gone with the Wind”. Sorry - JJ).

George Newnham’s grave occupies a corner of the south cemetery of the church. In those days of large families, he was married three times and sired thirteen offspring. The main tenet of his preaching was “abstinence” – presumably this only applied to drink!

Teetotalism also featured in the Spackman family. A stance no doubt influenced by a Glee Concert given at Biddestone. While the Spackman’s were performing on stage, some local wag was enticing their thirsty horse to imbibe the local ale; to a point that their return to Corsham was no longer possible. The family was stranded and furious.

Most militant was grocery department manager Ernest Spackman (no. 42 High St). He claimed that while the national average of population to public house was one in six hundred, the Corsham figure was one in one hundred and ninety. Pre 1914 he could count seven pubs between Corsham and Gastard. On one occasion an inebriated individual came into the grocer’s shop. Ernest whipped off his apron and followed the victim down the High St to the Methuen Arms. When asked by the landlord what he wanted Ernest replied “I intend to sit here until you cease to ply this man with alcohol!”

Joe James

A few names of the ancient inns of the Parish:-

Old George	Adjoining the Post Office , High Street
Golden Ball	Thought to have been in Church Square
The Lamb	Now 15 High St
Ring-o-bells	Now 78 High Street
Bell Inn	North of Heywood School, Priory St
Fleur de Lys	Pound Pill
The Unicorn	Westrop
The Virginia Planter	Biddestone
Seven Stars (seven stars traditionally shown as halo over the Virgin Mary)	Corner of Monks Lane
Winters Court	Now Methuen Arms



Corsham Chamber of Commerce

Ian Storey introduced himself to us at our 'Nibbles Night'. He is the President of the Chamber and lives in Woodlands. Some of you may have encountered him around the town. He operates as an independent business, selling his services (some of them, at any rate) to the Wessex Association of Chambers of Commerce, based in Trowbridge. It is the Wessex Association that represents the Corsham Chamber – and approximately another 12 local Chambers – at local, sub-regional and regional level. It also provides the administrative support to these local Chambers. There will be an increasing number of occasions where we can achieve things for the good of the community through enhanced collaboration with the Chamber, and we shall welcome the opportunity to do so.

Pound Arts Centre

Members will already be aware that our usual venue for open meetings is open to variation, due to the restoration project being undertaken at The Pound Arts Centre this year.

Several of our meetings have already been scheduled at Church House (May, June, July, & September), but please take note of posters in the Martingate centre, or the window of the TIC, which will highlight any changes that may occur during this period. We have received confirmation that the Planning Application for the restoration has been approved however, being the owner of the property in this case, the District Council is barred from authorising its own Planning Application. The Law of the Land requires that the matter is referred to the Secretary of State – which is where the Application is presently being addressed, having reached there with a positive endorsement from NWDC. As a Society we had some reservations regarding the adequacy of the car parking provision, but apparently that is deemed to be acceptable.

Operation Christmas Child - Melksham

The charity, Operation Christmas Child, which is part of Samaritans Purse International, was last year aiming to deliver 1,250,000 gift filled shoeboxes to underprivileged children in Eastern Europe and parts of Africa. As part of this, in 2005, the OCC warehouse at Melksham, headed by Hilary McFall and helped by approx 30 volunteers, sent over 39,500 shoeboxes, to Serbia, Bosnia, Ukraine and Romania.

Margaret has been a volunteer for the last 6 years at Melksham. Her main task being to check the contents of the shoeboxes, removing donated funds, any liquids and if necessary, adding other gifts, to ensure that the boxes are full. These are then sealed and sorted into age categories.

For the last 3 years Brian has assisted at Melksham, packing the above boxes into transport cartons, onto pallets and then into articulated lorries. This last year he has become warehouse manager, with all the above duties as well as keeping an inventory of all goods leaving the depot.

In 2005 Margaret was invited to join a humanitarian aid team, which was going to Belarus, to hand out shoeboxes to underprivileged children, a humbling task. She took with her a quantity of hand puppets, which were very popular with children of all age groups. This year the aim at Melksham is to knit 1,000 puppets, with a little help from our friends! Anyone wishing to help may obtain patterns from us.

If you would like to know more, why not come along to one of our coffee mornings. These are held at 10 a.m. on the first Saturday of every month, at the warehouse, 12 Hercules Way, Bowerhill Trading Estate.

Margaret & Brian Gibbs

Tel: 01225 810621

Email: brian@hamfist.co.uk



Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy

We have now received a draft copy of this plan produced by The Wiltshire Waste Partnership comprising Officer and Member representation from the County Council and four District Councils. The adopted Waste Local Plan is to be replaced with a series of Waste Local Development Documents (LDDs) which it is hoped will streamline and speed up the planning process.

The Waste Forum has now completed nine meetings led by facilitators Adams Hendry Consulting Ltd. Topics such as landfill, hazardous waste and the identification of future waste sites have been discussed. The forum will reconvene at a future date to debate the new Waste Planning LDDs for Wiltshire and Swindon.

I found the meetings where future waste sites were discussed particularly interesting. The Waste Planning Policy Team had considered and inspected 99 sites for their potential from a variety of perspectives, ie. social, environmental and economic etc. They proposed that 55 were suitable for use, 40 to be dropped and 4 required additional consideration. Aerial photographs, road maps and local ordnance survey maps showing all the locations were available and forum delegates who had local knowledge and came from various backgrounds provided valuable information. The facilitators have compiled an outcome report to summarise the group sessions and another meeting is scheduled in March for the response of Officers who are preparing the draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document: Issues and Options Report. The final issue is due to be published for public consultation on 3 April 2006.

CCS members may also be interested to hear that the County Council is making progress towards contracts to increase our diversion of waste from landfill. The first contract involves the building of a mechanical biological treatment plant (MBT) at Westbury. The second would be for the transportation from 2008 of 50,000 tonnes per year of household waste from Salisbury district to a new energy from waste plant being built near Slough in Berkshire. Watch this space for further news!

Pat Britton

Waste Wood

Members will remember that Ed Brand attended one of our open meetings last year, telling us about a social enterprise for 'Wood Recycling'. We are pleased to announce the scheme is now up and running and is located at Castle Combe. The volunteers now want to collect wood, and are interested in any businesses and builders who may have 'waste' wood to dispose of. When they have enough wood, they will then be able to set up a retail service enabling us to buy re-usable wood.

In order to make this scheme financially viable there is a need to charge a minimum of £25 (to include up to 2 cubic metres of wood).

Ed is keen to hear from anyone who is willing to volunteer to help. Ring him on 01249 714338, or e-mail edmundbrand@aol.com.

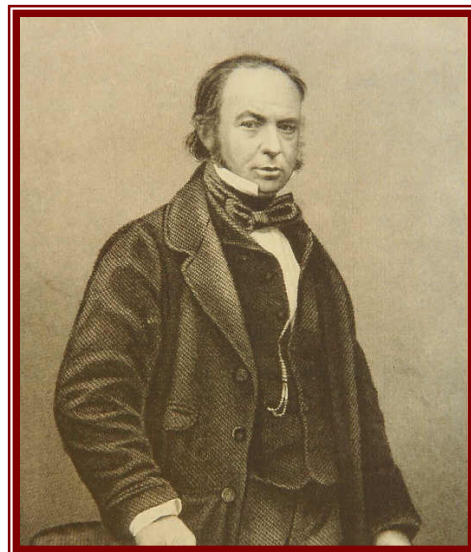
Mayo Memorial

Our Project Managers from CMS met with the NWDC Officer concerned with Listed Buildings during November. This gave her an opportunity to see the extent of the damage, and to advise on the acceptable way to proceed. 'Conservative Restoration' was the term used, and budgetary costs were assembled in order that John Harwood (Treasurer) can put forward the LHI grant application to take us forward to the next stage. Our draft application for funding from the Local Heritage Initiative was submitted just before Christmas. There is re-organisation at the office where it is being reviewed and we must await the inevitable 'pass the parcel' activity. CMS, our 'project management collaborator', is less than a week away from submitting the Planning Application. Corsham Town Council is maintaining its watching brief.



Brunel Bicentenary – 2006

Our Brunel Exhibition, in conjunction with the TIC, will be held at the Tourist information Office during April. Here you will be able to hear Joe James recording of "The Lost Valley", and also collect a 'Brunel Trail' leaflet based on excellent information provided by Martin Yallop, to guide you along the route this famous man took when creating the Railway between Swindon and Bristol. Thank you Martin. Our sincere thanks also go to Joe, for giving us such a wealth of information, and to Eric Mahy for putting it into a media context for use now and in the future.



Top Hat & Rails

Hear excerpts from "The Lost Valley" with Joe James on Wiltshire Sound on 9th April at 9 am.

The Future of Corsham TIC - Latest

As reported in our last edition, the Society has embarked upon a collaborative project with other Corsham organisations to find a structure under which the Corsham Tourist Information & Heritage Centre can operate in a financially sustainable way.

A Proposal based on the concept of a Development Trust was prepared by Ian Storey President of Corsham's Chamber of Commerce, and our Chairman, was submitted to the TIC's present operators, NWDC, in October. The local authority, in turn, presented it to the Town Council, in November, for it to consider. As is well known, the Town Council has been wrestling with the problem of how to maintain the TIC for some months – ever since it became clear that NWDC would be terminating its financial support for the present facility in the very near future.

Upon receipt of the Proposal, the Town Council set up a Working Group to consider it and other options. The first meeting of the WG took place on 30 January. We understand that it raised certain questions, which would need to be considered by the Council's Finance & General Purposes Committee. Its then next meeting was scheduled for 13 February. We await further news of this process.

The participation of the Corsham Town Council in the proposed Development Trust is recognised as being essential. It clearly has an elected representative role in the local community. It also is charged with the role of trustee for the management of Arnold House, the property from which the TIC presently operates and which was bequeathed to the town by the Pictor family. The Proposal foresees the new Centre continuing to be located in this building.

Date for your Diary
Sat 10th June 2006
Lunch on the Lawn
 At Corsham Court 12 –3pm



The Town Hall Clock

In our November issue Peter Biggins told the history of the clock, and asked if anyone knew who used to wind it. We have had a response from one of our members - Marjorie Hancock. She writes:-

"I was interested to read the article in Spotlight about the Town Hall Clock. From the late 1930's until 1956 my father Henry Williams was caretaker of the Town Hall; he had previously worked for the builders 'Osbornes' as a carpenter, but owing to deteriorating eyesight after rheumatic fever he was no longer able to "follow his trade".

The clock had to be wound every week with a handle, not a key. There was a long ladder, hidden behind the chairs, kept below the clock in the main hall. Often my brother Bernard did this, it was quite a scary job, and no one was very keen on doing it. My father died in 1956 so I don't know what happened after that date"

Corsham Print

You will have noticed that Corsham Print is the well-established local firm that publishes this magazine four times per year, free of charge. We thought you would be interested to hear a little about themselves and their business. Thank you Corsham Print for all you do for us. (Ed)

The Perry family, in one guise or another, has been producing print or supplying stationery in Corsham since the late 1970's. Originally as Addkey Print Ltd and more recently Corsham Print Ltd, they have traded their wares from four different premises within the Parish of Corsham, soon to be five with their acquisition of Unit 4, Leafield Trading Estate.

The original company name, Addkey, was made up from the names of the founding Directors of the business Angela Wall, Doug Perry, Daphne Perry, Ken Wall and Tom Sweeney, it also represented the 'addition key' on a calculator as Doug Perry and Ken Wall's original business idea was to trade in office equipment, primarily the fast growing market in electronic calculators.

Alexander Terrace was the print company's first home, operating from the red brick building and adjoining garages behind the launderette. These were humble

beginnings and it was not unusual to have to break the ice in the damper ducts of the presses on a cold morning.

In 1986 the former United Reform Church was purchased and a sixteen year residency saw the business grow to 20 members of staff and the introduction of a stationery outlet, which in 1995 was relocated to 19 Pickwick Road (now DAC Stationery).

With the redevelopment of the Town centre and the retirement of Doug and Daphne it was decided to sell the Church and rationalize the business with Chris Perry and David Kilmurray forming a new company, Corsham Print Ltd, renting units at Pickwick Workshops in Park Lane. The new company's primary aim was to provide print to the ever increasing market of SME's (small and medium sized enterprises) who they felt were being ignored by the bigger printing concerns.

This year should prove to be another exciting period for Corsham Print, with the move to new premises planned for the early summer and the installation of a new Direct Imaging Printing Press.

The Directors are very happy to have found premises in Corsham as it was looking increasingly likely that a move out of the area was going to be the only option. They were keen to maintain the 27 year association with their home town.

Chris Perry

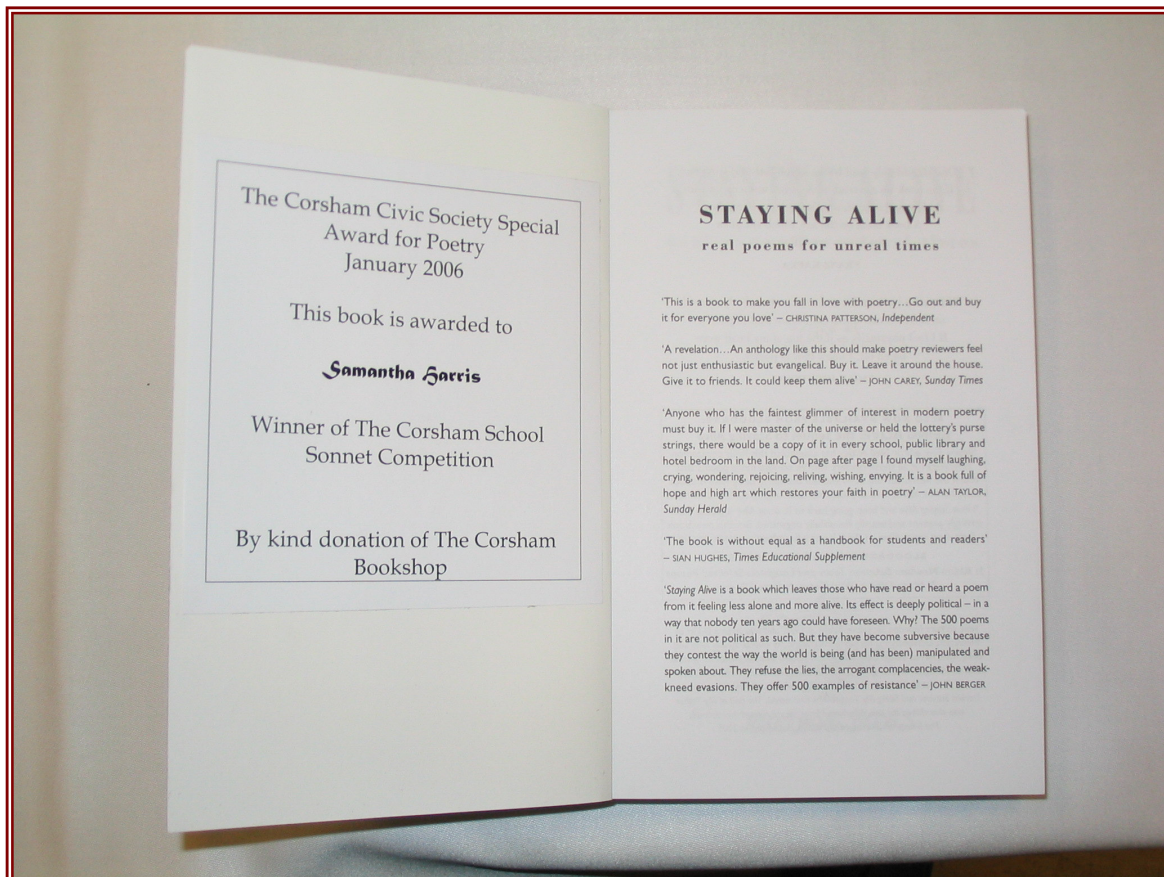
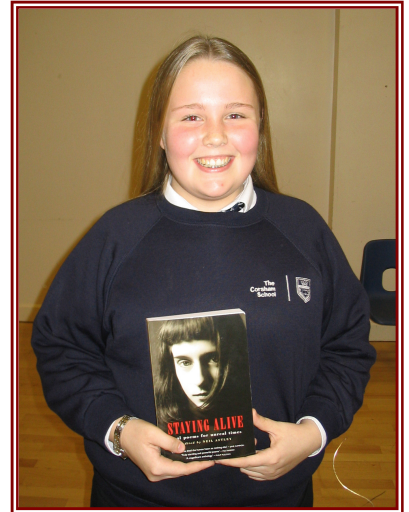


The 2006 Corsham School Annual Awards

For the 3rd year now, we have sponsored this highly meritorious and prestigious award at our local secondary school. As previously, Gale Curry bore the brunt of the effort on our behalf – evaluating no less than 50 ‘short listed’ entries over a weekend to find the one winner. Gale and Naomi Boulding, the School’s Head of English do make a wonderful team. Equally once again, Peter French (Corsham Bookshop) donated the prize. Gale – your contribution to raising the public profile of the Society in a positive manner is beyond measure. Many, many thanks. Peter – your generosity towards the community knows no bounds. Long may it continue?

The Award was presented as one of the many made at the School’s ‘Annual Awards Night’ on the 12th of January – and again our award was the only one where the winner has something to keep for the future, rather than simply a memory.

This year’s winner was Samantha (‘Sam’) Harris – pictured here with her prize (selected by Gale), together with a photograph of the inside front-cover of the book, complete with the label-cum-certificate which identifies how the award came about. Well Done, Sam!



Me and the Civic Trust

As many of you will doubtless know, our Corsham Civic Society is affiliated to the Civic Trust a national body based in London and organised on a regional basis. We are one of over 800 civic societies in this movement. There is a National Committee which comprises the Trustees, the Managing Director, the Head of Civic Societies – and the 9 so-called ‘Chairmen’ of the ‘Regional Associations’, as they are called. It meets quarterly. We come within the South West Region. Until about six months ago, I was personally totally unaware of this regional structure and the role it was intended to play on our behalf. I suspect that this sorry state of affairs goes for most of our predecessors, and us. The reason for it is that the SW region is such a large region. Its present Chairman, and his immediate predecessor, is located in the Taunton area. The tendency has been for them to deal with ‘our’ region as if it were Devon and Cornwall only. In fact that has meant that the societies in

Somerset, Wiltshire, Dorset and Gloucester have been left unloved and unattended-to.

There is a new air being breathed in the Civic Trust right now – despite some financial concerns which arise from certain lines of funding coming to their natural conclusion. Part of this ‘new thinking’ is that the (old) SW Region is being split into the Inner SW and the Outer SW. The current Chairman will take over the Outer SW – and I have been invited to take over (start-up, really) the Inner SW. I am already attending National Committee meetings in this capacity – the most recent one was the day before yesterday. So, as you will appreciate, while I will not be the Chairman of your individual Civic Society after the AGM in May, you will not be seeing the back of me.

Spring cleaning our Website

It is now almost two years since we made our entrance on the world-wide web. Our launch into this new environment was masterminded by Eric Mahy, aided and abetted by Andrew Halliday. Apart from some initial set-up expenses, the website has not cost us a penny - the ‘space’ having been donated by Eric who acquired it when he first registered with BT as his e-mail service provider. The Society’s website address is www.corsham-civic-society.co.uk, for those who have not yet installed it as one of the ‘Favourites’. It is worth a look. Getting started was the key. However, we soon found out that regular updating and other maintenance is essential. Now, Eric is a busy chap, and leaving it all up to him was proving an unfair burden to expect him to carry single-handedly. We needed another member to work with him. Forward stepped Brian Gibbs, a recent new member from Neston.

Brian is also very busy, but his pre-occupations are of the non wage-earning variety. And he has a burning desire to use his growing IT skills to help the community. However, we do have to compete for his time with such interests as servicing the needs of charity trips to the deserving of Romania and the arrangement of long walks for the local populace! Fortunately he has managed to find some time to help us. In Brian’s case, a little time goes a long way, he has developed and populated our website with the latest data, and has re-structured it. It is now a lot more informative and you can find yourself around it far more easily.

However, we do have a problem – we have run out of ‘space’. We have sought advice from various sources – including the Civic Trust – but have yet to crack it. The result is that we cannot get all the copies of ‘Spotlight’ on to our website that we would like to. Brian is working on it. We are confident that he will find the solution.

Car Parking

In December we saw the temporary changes to the cost of local car parking, and this has continued until March. The meeting held at the Town Hall at end November brought forth several interesting options which might relieve the situation in the town –

The Society had proposed the possible extension to the car park at Springfield, or at the Station site. Neither was met with much enthusiasm at the time, but our friends of the Chamber of Commerce have pursued the suggestion in writing to the NWDC, and we await their response. Our latest information is that things are still very much up in the air – but that some useful new thinking is going into the creation of some extra ‘overflow’ car parking spaces and the bringing about of some improvements to the local bus services.



Welcome to Inspector Gavin Williams

As a Society, we had established a useful relationship with our local police inspector, Inspector Dave Cullop. Members will recall that he delivered a very informative presentation to us at last August's monthly meeting. As seems to be the way with police officers, once they have begun to climb the organisational ladder, they are moved to another 'manor'. So it was with Dave, shortly after he came to speak to us.

Dave's replacement is Inspector Gavin Williams. Like Dave Cullop, Gavin is the 'Sector Inspector' for Calne and Corsham – which means he is kept pretty busy. However, keen that we should retain our link with the local constabulary, our Chairman made early contact with Gavin and went in to see him at the Corsham Police Station one morning last November, and Gavin readily agreed to provide us with a brief introductory piece for the readers of 'Spotlight'. He writes:-

I am 35 years old, married to Caron and have two children, Katie 4 years and Matthew 9 weeks. I have served in Swindon, both at the Westlea and Central Stations, on a response team, and also a short spell on the traffic department policing the M4 motorway.

At Wootton Bassett, where I was promoted to Section Sergeant I had responsibility for the station and area as the sole Sergeant. I then moved to Malmesbury as Section Sergeant. Whilst at Malmesbury I worked towards achieving the highest detection rate for the force for the year 2004/5. I enjoyed excellent community links and worked with the Community Safety Partnership on initiatives such as CCTV and an Alcohol Exclusion zone which is due to be implemented shortly. Prior to moving to Corsham I was Divisional Custody Inspector responsible for the Custody Suite at Melksham Police station which serves C Division.

I am very pleased with my move to Corsham and I thoroughly enjoyed my time at both Wootton Bassett and Malmesbury and enjoyed the

Community interaction.

One of my priorities is anti social behaviour. I attended a meeting with North Wiltshire Council recently to progress anti social behaviour issues within our area. I aim to impact on quality of life issues locally.

One of the challenges of the area is travelling criminals, who do visit us from time to time from areas such as Bath and Bristol. My approach at Malmesbury was to return the favour and go and see the people who came to the area to commit crime and deal with them positively. This resulted in a number of successes and again I aim to continue this approach.

With me at the station is Sergeant Melanie Rolph who is responsible for the day to day running of the section. I am really pleased that Mel is at Corsham as I have worked with her previously and we both have a similar approach to problem solving.

Best Wishes

Gavin Williams"

Gavin's mention of his Corsham Station's Station Sergeant, Sgt Melanie Rolph merits comment. Members may have seen Mel in the local press a week or so back. Through her team, she has launched a new initiative aimed at cracking down on Corsham's anti-social behaviour. A form has been devised which people can fill in if they are aware of any problems around the town. The forms are available at the Corsham Library, the Town Hall and at post offices. They can be completed anonymously and are there in case people don't think an incident is serious enough to call the police. We commend the use of this form to all our members – and extend a warm Corsham welcome to both Mel and Gavin.

Local Strategic Partnership

This is the District-level Partnership upon which we are represented through our membership of the Corsham Area Community Partnership. At present I am the CACP's representative – being one of 15 voting members of the NWP's Board. Things are now moving ahead (at last, I hear you cry!). The 1st Annual Conference that took place in Chippenham's Neeld Hall in November brought the actions expected of the Partnership sharply into focus. Since then, Champions for each group of actions have been appointed and their action plans are required to be presented at the next meeting in February. I managed to dodge being appointed to the role of Champion of anything really major. Rather, I have accepted the role of assistant to the Chairman, Dave Ashmore, the Chief Executive of Westlea Housing, on matters concerning 'Communication'.

Meanwhile, good 'ole John Prescott's department has been hard at it. The ODPM has brought out a 70-page document entitled 'Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future – A consultation paper. It contains 35 key questions. The NWP will be formulating its response at that February meeting.



Corsham's Jazz Club

Mark Sammut was the chap who led the team, which made such a success of the 2005 Corsham Jazz Festival. We caught up with him to ask how the Corsham jazz scene was developing for 2006. This is what he told us

'Jazz at the Oak' started its new season on Friday 3 February and is scheduled for the first Friday of every month. John Critchinson and guests occupied the stage in February. The award winning Alan Barnes will be the Club's guest on 3 March, while 7 April brings the Tim Collinson Quartet to the Oak. Tim is London-based but has an old Corsham connection. All these artists are mainstream bands which means lots of tuneful melodies both from the American songbook, (and of course the British!) as well as a good smattering of original compositions.



Tickets for February sold well so the Club hopes that it will be in a position soon to announce acts for May, June and July. Tickets are on sale at the Royal Oak and at the Tourist Information Office, both in the High Street. Some tickets are available on the door if room permits! A small - but perfectly formed Jazz Festival - is in the planning stage for early September, Mark tells us.



Where has our Noticeboard gone?

The noticeboard is presently safely resting in Geoff Knapp's garage. Geoff and I removed it from its previous location (on the wall opposite the old Barclays ATM, the wall forming one side of the old 'Bengal Kitchen') during December – before its means of support, the aforesaid wall - was dismantled as part of the redevelopment of that site. So far, so good. Things came unstuck when it came to us seeking Planning Consent to re-erect it somewhere else. Regardless of where that might be, we were told, very firmly, that we would have to apply officially and the cost of that application would be no less than £280!! Payable, note you, to NWDC. Assuming that this would be a no-no as far as the use of our funds is concerned, I have set out to secure such a sum from other sources – sources that might view our noticeboard as a valuable asset to the Corsham town centre. My first port-of-call was the NWDC's 'Town Centre Management Fund' Yes, you heard me right – a fund whose costs are met by NWDC! I am pleased to report to you that the person in charge of administering this fund has agreed to allocate to us the maximum amount possible for this 'project' – being 50% of the total cost, i.e. £140. So, we are halfway there. Only the other £140 to find.

Another potential source of financial assistance was the Corsham Town Council's 'Local Group Support Fund'. We have submitted an application here, and have some reasonable hope of a positive outcome. With this in mind we issued a request to the members and guests (60+ of them) who turned up for our New Year Celebration meeting on 27 Jan. This met with an excellent result. We are edging ever closer to our objective! Meanwhile Geoff is being asked to make sure his paintbrushes are clean, in readiness to give the notice board a birthday.



Corsham Civic Society

Civic Society Officers

President

Mrs Anne Greenly

Chairman

Mr Peter Tapscott, 4 Charlwood
Road, Corsham
Tel: 01249 714453

Hon Sec

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Tel: 01249 446128

Plans Chairman

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Tel: 01249 712270

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.Corsham-Civic-Society.co.uk

2006 Programme

- 24 March** 'Victoriana' – Quiz & Fun. Presented by David Harries. Venue: The Pound.
- 28 April** Bath Museum of Brass with Curator/Director, Stuart Burroughes. Venue: St Aldhelms, Pickwick Rd.
- 26 May** AGM (7pm for 7.15pm) followed by a return visit by Michael Horseman with 'A Bit of This and That'. Venue: Church House.
- June** Our annual 'Evening walk around Corsham'.
- 23 June** To Be Advised. Venue: Church House. + Corsham Festival.
- 28 July** 'The Wiltshire Times - a talk about it's History. (To be confirmed.) Venue: Church House.
- August** Visit to the Bath Brass Museum + BBQ + Summer Outing. (Dates to be advised.)
- September** HODS. (Heritage Open Days)
- 22 September** A look at 'Shoes through the Ages'. Mr C Nixon. Venue: St Aldhelms, Pickwick Rd.
- 27 October** A Musical Evening (1850-1950) A Tribute to the Spackman Family – directed by Wyndham Thomas. Venue: St Aldhelms, Pickwick Rd
- 24 November** 'Beliefs in Stone' – Churches. Venue: St Aldhelms, Pickwick Rd
- December** No meeting.
- 2007**
- 26 January** Celebration of the New Year – a Social Gathering. Venue to be advised.

All meetings to be held at 8pm. Watch for change of **venue**.
Guests are welcome. Members - £1, Non members - £2

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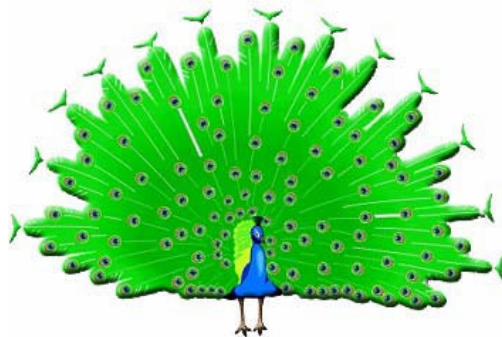
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Corsham Civic Society

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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Registered Charity No: 275321**

