



# Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS



---

Issue 3/10

August 2010

---



*Promoting the Society's message at Maidenhead Carnival, June 2010*

*Visit our website: [www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk](http://www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk)*

# CHAIRMAN'S FOREWARD

It was good to see so many members at the delightful garden party at the beginning of July. It came at the end of a period which for me had also included Maidenhead Carnival and a diaryful of meetings and other events. Consequently I'd had the pleasure of talking about Maidenhead with many more people than normal over the last couple of months.

The majority, I'm happy to reflect, all shared a passion about the town but behind the passion lay a panorama of extreme perspectives.

There was occasional despair about the shopping centre; exasperation at some planning applications and decisions; quiet concern at the state of the economy, but a cool determination for finding a way forward; pride in having found such a friendly place to live; and optimism about the emerging town plan. You're unlikely to find a broader church than that anywhere.

The greatest surprises came from two recently arrived women who, while recognising the effects of the recession, were full of admiration for the town's range of independent shops. And the news that a long-serving and respected Maidenhead professional had no inkling of the Maidenhead Waterways Restoration Group.

Moves are afoot to improve things in the shorter term to attract new business to the town centre and improve its image and communications. And, as we know, plans for the longterm future of the town centre are well in hand. These are expected to be approved by the council before going out to final consultation in September and public examination in the new year.

Although the Civic Society is involved in both these initiatives, we are not being complacent. We recognise the diverse range of opinions expressed above. At a time of renewed political interest in localism we need, along with other Societies affiliated to the new Civic Voice (see page 6), to seize the opportunities presented by empowering communities to press for our goals.

To enable us to do this with authority we have to maintain our strength of numbers. We'd like to see more of the membership forms we issued earlier this year being returned completed to our membership secretary. Without a serious influx of members, the Society will be lucky to see its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, let alone its 100<sup>th</sup>. Please do your bit to help.

*Bob Dulson*

# CARNIVAL CHEER

Raising the profile was the name of the game as the Society shared the sunshine and the fun with other charity stallholders at Maidenhead Carnival in June.

It is only the second time that the Carnival has been held in Kidwells Park and it attracted good numbers. We found ourselves greeting a number of carnival-goers who, though Maidenians for years, knew nothing of the Society but were keen to know more. The Society extends a warm welcome to those who decided to take up membership on the spot and thanks those existing members who dropped by to say hello.



With a display that reflected the Society's achievements over 50 years, our stand looked impressive in its blue and white corporate colours. Thanks are due Ann, Ben and Brian Darracott, Angela and Bob Dulson, June Jorge, Martin McNamee, Gillian Moore, Lydia Parker, Tina Sell and Brian Smith for helping to prepare, erect and man it over two days.

Footnote: A gusty breeze on the second day dealt several blows to our decorative balloons, resulting in a random series of pistol-like reports just as the runners were lining up for the relay marathon. Fortunately no false starts were declared!

*Bob Dulson*

# PLANNING MATTERS

During the last three months the Planning Group has reviewed more than 40 recently submitted applications, and we have made comments to the planning authorities on ten proposals. None of the comments related to major proposals, and we were generally concerned with inaccuracies and/or omissions from the planning applications upon which the planners have to make their decisions. The levels of information and standard of plans and drawings are often inadequate, and we believe that the planning department should expect higher standards.

There are two major schemes in the pipeline – neither of which has actually reached the stage where plans have been formally submitted. Before summer is out, it is expected that there will be an application for **Albany House, 27 Market Street** – which most people will know as the “Regus” building, on the south-west quadrant of the Cookham Road roundabout. The developers have held a series of consultations



with interested parties – including ourselves. The existing 4/5-storey building (left) which is set back from the roundabout is to be demolished and replaced by a 9 storey high, largely glass structure, which will have an apex (pointing north-eastwards) which will encroach on the land surrounding the roundabout. There are two additional underground levels

accommodating 70 vehicles and 66 bicycles. The building will total 7060 sq meters, and is envisaged being occupied on a multi-tenant floor-by-floor basis. It would be premature to comment specifically on the project until the plans have been formally submitted. Our comments will be published in a future edition of the Newsletter. It is expected that this will be one of several proposals to generate high-rise office space in the area between West Street and Bad Godesberg Way. You may recall that plans have already been passed for the adjacent office block – which has approval for seven storeys. If the Albany House scheme is approved, then a precedent will have been established.

If such development takes place on the south side of Bad Godesberg Way, it is to be hoped that the Kidwells Park side will be spared such extremes of height. There has been another consultation on the future of the **Commonwealth War Graves Commission** headquarters building on Marlow Road. This building was constructed as a purpose-built headquarters in the early 1970s. Although its design was greeted with mixed enthusiasm, it received an award in 1974 from the Royal Institute of British Architects. It is not a memorial building as such, but design features include a

dug-out entrance, a pillbox structure, a gatehouse with portcullis, all incorporated in a keep and bailey design. The CWGC employs about 75 people at their Maidenhead headquarters, and maintain that the building no longer meets the needs of the organisation. The building (right) is now too large in view of the improved ability to store data, and inflexible for modern day requirements. There is a campaign to preserve the building, and a move (supported by the Royal Borough) to have the structure listed. However, the real concern is the alternative proposal for the site. There will be 55 flats in an arrangement of blocks, with the easternmost structure, which overlooks Kidwells Park, rising to eleven storeys. This news was first published in January and a planning application was expected in the spring. So far no formal proposals have been lodged. If the proposals do include high-rise development outside of the ring road we will be opposing the development.



Whatever the merits of the CWGC building, if it is to be demolished then only the existing 4/5 storeys should replace it. Eleven storeys would be completely unacceptable. If the organisation – which is publically funded and not-for-profit – adheres to its principles then it does not need to act as a developer to fund its relocation.

*Martin McNamee*

## **STOP PRESS**

**Design Awards** – As the Newsletter was going to press, RBWM announced the welcome revival of its Design Awards Scheme. Anyone can nominate an entry in an extended list of categories: New Build (large or small developments), Renovations/Extensions (inc. conversions & shopfronts), Sustainable Design (projects in any category), Historic Environment/Conservation (alteration or conversions of historic buildings or a new build that enhances its historic/conservation setting), Open Space/Public Realm (public or private spaces designed improve their environment).

For the first time, the public will be involved in the judging too, choosing their favourite in the New Build category for a People's Choice Award. Entry forms can be obtained from the Library or the town Hall or completed online at [www.rbwm.gov.uk](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk) where further details can be found. The closing date for entries is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September and the result will be announced in November.

# A FOUNDER MEMBER OF CIVIC VOICE

Maidenhead Civic Society is pleased to have become a founder member of Civic Voice, the new body set up following the demise last year of the Civic Trust.

For many years the Civic Trust was the rallying point for the large number of Civic Societies across the country. Sadly the Trust fell on hard times financially but very quickly Civic Voice was set up and looks set fair to replace the Trust, and more effectively.

Civic Voice was formally launched in April and already has nearly 250 member societies. It has the support of English Heritage and the National Trust and it was recently confirmed that Griff Rhys Jones is to become its president.

The civic movement is based on a network of hundreds of local voluntary civic and amenity societies in the warp and weft of communities across England. It is one of the largest social movements in the country. Civic Voice believes everyone has the right to live somewhere they can be proud of. By providing a focus and levels of advice and support, it aims to give the civic movement a strong local presence and an influential national voice.

Civic Voice is funded by contributions from member Civic Societies unlike the Civic Trust which relied on outside funding.

## **Free National Trust Day Pass**

One benefit of our affiliation to Civic Voice is that members of our Society can receive a free National Trust day access pass. This will provide free access to any National Trust property during normal opening hours subject to a small number of restrictions.

The pass is transferable so it can be given to friends or family if a member is already a member of the National Trust. The free pass is available to members by using the following link: [www.civicvoice.org.uk/nationaltrustcivicvoiceoffer](http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/nationaltrustcivicvoiceoffer). If you don't have internet access the free day pass is also available by sending a stamped addressed envelope to Civic Voice (National Trust Offer), Unit 101, 82 Wood Street, Liverpool, L1 4DQ requesting one and including your contact details and the name of the Society of which you are a member.

This offer is available for the first year of our membership of Civic Voice, i.e. until March 2011.

*Bob Dulson*

# PROJECTS

## OCKWELLS SETTING

Members will remember that in June 2009 the Society tabled a motion at Maidenhead Town Forum, that the 22-acre field opposite Ockwells Manor be re-designated green belt. What we didn't know at the time was that there was an application to lift the covenants that protect this field.



*A panoramic view of the field, with the houses of Treesmill Drive at the left and the line of trees along Ockwells Road to the right. Ockwells Manor is situated on the south side of the road behind these trees.*

The National Trust, who also want the field re-designated, have said the following about previous attempts to lift the covenants:

*“The setting of Ockwells Manor is protected by a series of restrictive covenants in favour of the National Trust. Two attempts have been previously made to vary the covenants and these have been resisted by the National Trust (in 1981 and 1992). In the last (1992) decision, the president of the Lands Tribunal concluded that he was ‘not.... persuaded.....that the application land has ceased to be part of the setting of the Manor by virtue of the tree planting that has taken place. The setting of a building includes its approach and the northern approach to Ockwells Manor is historically and naturally the principal approach to it [continues] ...development would be very damaging to the setting and quite incongruous [and finally and very significantly]....the setting of the Manor is not to be judged solely in visual terms’”.*

Since March 2010 I have been in contact with the National Trust and subsequently their consultants, *Land Use Consultants*, to put together a document detailing the historic and functional links between the land to the north of Ockwells and the landscape/ownership connection with Ockwells Manor house. This document has now been submitted to the Trust and it is expected that the case will be heard before the Lands Tribunal in the autumn.

The evidence collected demonstrates that the field has been part of what was once Ockwells Farm as far back as 1639. Much of the documentation consulted is in Berkshire Record Office, including documents deposited there when the Taplow

Court Estate Office was emptied after the death of William Henry Grenfell, Lord Desborough, whose family had owned Ockwells. Other documents were bought by the Record Office in 1994 and via eBay in October 2003 (see our newsletter 4/03 p14). In addition, copies of maps, sale catalogues etc. acquired for the Ockwells Project over the years, were trawled for useful information.

One of the problems was that several documents listed field names but the map of Ockwells Farm in the Record Office did not name the field opposite the manor house. A breakthrough moment was realising that the Ockwells Manor part of the 1877 Estate Map of William Henry Grenfell, given to us many years ago by SGI-UK who now own Taplow Court, had on it an identifying number for this field (then much larger than it is now). This number, 413a, could be identified as the field All Reading (Alreading, Allriding, Altwoodriding) from a table in the 1892 Sale Catalogue when the house was sold after a major restoration, together with other lots including the field. Shortly after, both house and several fields were purchased by Sir Edward Barry. Documents indicate that All Reading field was part of Ockwells Farm to before 1639.



*Ockwells section of the 1877 Estate Map of William Henry Grenfell,  
Lord Desborough, who then owned Ockwells Manor*



LOT 2.					
Nos. ON PLAN.	TENANTS' NAMES.	DESCRIPTION.	CULTIVATION.	ACREAGE.	TOTAL ACREAGE.
				A. R. P.	A. R. P.
413A	Allport Wilkerson	All Readings ...	Arable ...	36 3 8	
412	In hand ...	Node Copse ..	Wood ...	0 1 29	
					37 0 37

*Table in the 1892 Sale catalogue listing field numbers and names*



*A map of the field when owned by Sir Edward Barry (ca. 1920)*

The Society would like to thank the staff of the Record Office, particularly Mark Stevens, for their help. The Society has benefited as we now have a copy of the 1800 Ockwells Farm map to add to our collection. We will have to wait and see whether we can give any further assistance to the National Trust and prevent the last little bit of the setting of Ockwells Manor from being destroyed.

### THE GREEN WAY - WINDOWS 3

You will have noticed that York Stream is still flowing through the town, thanks in part to the Windows spraying programme that, over the last two years, has tried to control reed congestion in Maidenhead Ditch/York Stream. The Green Way Working Group have decided to repeat the spraying programme again this year (Windows 3) and the amenity societies have had a preliminary site visit with the Environment Agency to pinpoint areas to be treated.



*Ian Stretton of the Environment Agency and Margaret Bowdery of East Berks Ramblers inspecting the stream from the Flood Control Gate (FCG)*



*View north from the FCG July 2009*



*.....and in June 2010 after spraying in September 2009 and tree pollarding*

*Reed congestion north of  
Evenlode Bridge on Town Moor  
(Maidenhead Moor) to be  
sprayed this year*



## **BADNELLS PIT DISCHARGE**



Another recent development on Town Moor is the installation of this pipe discharging from Michael Shanly's Badnell's Pit development into York Stream. They have permission for the discharge of surface water (road drains etc) only.

## **BOUNDARY WALK SUNDAY 3<sup>rd</sup> OCTOBER 2010**

For the last four years we have cleared a path across from the Lower Cookham Road to the Thames Path with permission of the land owners to allow the Boundary Walkers to complete their walk in safer more pleasant surroundings than walking along the Lower Cookham Road to Boulters Lock. We will be clearing again this year on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September, meeting at the junction of Sheephouse Road and the Lower Cookham Road at 10am. We will also be helping marshal on 3<sup>rd</sup> October at this spot. If you fancy helping give me a ring (01628 620280).

The path walked during the Boundary Walk is a missing link in the Millennium Walk, a long-distance route from Hurley across country to Maidenhead that connects at each end with the Thames Path. We are hopeful that the redevelopment of Whitebrook Park, when it happens, will help achieve a permanent route here.

*Ann Darracott*

# EVENTS

## FORTHCOMING TALKS

The talks take place in the Methodist Hall, King Street, Maidenhead. They commence at 8:00pm, with a break for light refreshments. Guests are most welcome. There will be a small charge to members of £3.00, and non-members, £4.00, which includes refreshments.

### **The work of the Buckinghamshire Search and Rescue Team**

**Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

Established in 1987 by the Bucks County Council Emergency Planning Officer, BSAR provides a pool of volunteers, trained in emergency procedures and First Aid, ready to assist the full time emergency services in the event of a major incident. Today BSAR's main role is to assist Thames Valley Police with missing person searches, ready to respond 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They may also be called upon to give aid in the search for forensic evidence. Rescues can include: Major Incident Response, Qualified First Aid, Casualty Extraction, Extreme Weather Assistance, Flood Response. Their involvement in public events calls for first aid cover, traffic marshalling, radio communications and Mobile Control Centres.

Two members of the Bucks Search and Rescue will be giving a presentation on the work they carry out in searching for missing people in and around the county of Buckinghamshire and the surrounding counties and also about the training received to help in all emergencies. The presentation will be interactive and there will be demonstrations of the equipment used showing the flexibility of the team. This will include: radios for communication between control and the team deployed; water awareness gear; CBRN suits for chemical incidents; climbing equipment; and stretchers.

This voluntary group sounds like an amazing selection of people. Come along and find out more about their activities.

### **“The Buildings of England – Berkshire” – the Revised Edition**

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

**By Dr Geoffrey Tyack, Director, Stanford University Programme in Oxford, Kellogg College, University of Oxford**

Geoffrey Tyack will be talking about the new updated edition of the “Berkshire” volume of the legendary series “The Buildings of England” by Nikolaus Pevsner (1902-83) which he has edited together with Dr Simon Bradley. This revised and comprehensive guide follows its historic boundaries, including the large area transferred to Oxfordshire in the 1970s. Berkshire's houses range from intriguing early timber-framed dwellings to the splendors of Windsor Castle, at once England's greatest fortress and finest royal palace, through Georgian, Victorian and Arts-&-Crafts mansions of exceptional diversity and richness. Besides its numerous medieval churches, the county is a wonderful hunting ground for the Gothic Revival,

including works by famous names such as Butterfield and G.E. Street. Its market towns retain much of their Georgian charm, while the prosperity of recent years has brought new waves of confident and innovative architecture. Each city, town or village is treated in a detailed gazetteer. A general introduction provides a historical and artistic overview. Also included are plentiful maps and plans, over 100 new colour photographs, full indexes and an illustrated glossary. The result is both an indispensable reference work and an invaluable guide.

Dr Tyack's main academic interests are in British and European architectural history, especially from the C18 to the C20 and the history of urban planning since the Renaissance. He also teaches Modern British History and the History of British Art and is currently carrying out research on the life and work of the architect John Nash. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a Trustee of the Oxford Preservation Trust, co-organiser of the Oxford Architectural History Seminar, and Editor of the Georgian Group Journal.



The book was published on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010 by Yale University Press (ISBN: 9780300126624). Geoffrey will be happy to sign copies of the book that Members may wish to bring along.

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010:** This is our AGM evening and the guest speaker will be Peter Quarmby, Regional Flood Risk Manager, Environment Agency, who will talk about climate change and flooding on the Thames. Further details in the November edition of the Newsletter.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> CIVIC SOCIETY LUNCHEON**

Following the success of our last luncheon at Boulters Inn, we are holding our next Speaker's Luncheon in another local historic building - Monkey Island Hotel, Bray on Thames. As the Society celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, we thought it appropriate to recollect events from the past and to enjoy the reflections of a member who has had major involvement in the growth of the Maidenhead Civic Society, so who better qualified than Richard Poad.

Richard Poad has been Chairman of the Maidenhead Heritage Centre for the past 15 years and has also been the driving force behind the project. The Centre has recently acquired a permanent home in Maidenhead. He was also awarded an MBE for services to the heritage of Maidenhead.

Monkey Island, near the village of **Bray-on-Thames** lies one mile down-stream from Maidenhead. It is generally assumed that the Island takes its name from the **monkey paintings** in the pavilion but this is not correct. The name derives from the earlier

title of “*Monks Eyot*” indicating that the island was being used by Monks, probably in association with their fishery in the Thames. The monkey paintings mentioned were painted by a French artist, Andie de Clermont. By 1840 the pavilion had become a riverside Inn, which could be reached by ferry from the South bank. It has been the haunt of many notable people including royalty, Rebecca West and HG Wells. Edward Elgar resided nearby. The footbridge was not built until 1956, and additional rooms were added in 1963 retaining the original building as a centrepiece. The Temple had become a private residence until in 1970 still more rooms were added and the property became Monkey Island Hotel with the original fishing temples scheduled as Grade I listed buildings.

This is an opportunity to celebrate 50 years of the Maidenhead Civic Society in an historic setting. Book your place using the enclosed form. Come along and bring a friend.

### **SUMMER CREAM TEA**



Once again we are very grateful to Shashi and Geoff Dare for hosting the Society's Summer Cream Tea in their delightful garden. Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July proved to be a scorcher, and the event attracted about 45 members and guests. The cream tea, with spicy variations, was delicious and looked splendid and the quiz went down very well too. This is an ideal way for members to meet and catch up on news and events and we to hope to do something similar again next year.

*Tina Sell*

### **OUTINGS AND VISITS**

Unfortunately, our trip to Knebworth earlier this month had to be cancelled due to lack of support. However, we have arranged a visit to Leighton House Museum in Kensington and the Florence Nightingale Museum on the South Bank on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October. Both are newly opened Museums. The Leighton Museum was the home of Lord Leighton and contains a wide range of art and tiles. The Florence Nightingale Museum follows the life and works of this most famous nurse and illustrates the impact that she had on nursing. Full details of the outing are contained in the booking form enclosed with this Newsletter.

*Mike Copeland*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

As you will be aware, the membership year extends from 1st June to 31st May and it is now time to renew. After many years of level membership subscriptions, we now have to make a small increase. Would all Members please complete the enclosed renewal form that was enclosed with the last Newsletter and send together with the appropriate subscription to Shashi Dare. **Please remember to amend your standing order if you may in this way.**

## NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION - HELP NEEDED!

As Dorothy Rowley, who kindly came to the rescue a few years ago, is no longer able to drive, we are looking for a replacement to deliver the bundles of Newsletters to our distributors at 12 addresses on the east side of Maidenhead (Molly Dunning has been covering the west side for many years). If you feel you could do this, please contact Carol Innes on (01628) 532418. Your call will be gratefully received!

## OLYMPICS TALK

In January we had a very interesting talk from Julia White, Officer for Information-RBWM, ably assisted by Amanda Bryett, Windsor Tourist Guide. We learned about past Olympics hosted by Great Britain, 1908 and 1948 also about local Olympian, Lord Desborough, and his numerous achievements. We also heard about the challenges faced by those who have involvement in the planning and organisation of the 2012 Olympics.

Some of the audience shared memories of the 1948 Olympics and Julia would love to hear from anybody who can add any family stories or personal experiences from this event. If you have any anecdotes about the 1948 Olympics, she would be happy for you to send them to her. Her email address is: [Julia.White@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:Julia.White@rbwm.gov.uk).

## “KEEPING IN TOUCH”

Some 70 members will have received by e-mail a few weeks ago the first of what we hope will be regular updates on the Society’s activities. We believe this will be a key communication route in the future. We’re still not sure if we have e-mail addresses for everyone who has online access, and we urge you to check that you have given us your up-to-date e-mail address. If you haven’t, just think what you may missing out on!



# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
**Talk** Bucks Search & Rescue Team

“Bucks Search & Rescue”  
 Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2010  
**Event & Talk** by Richard Poad

The Civic Society Luncheon.  
 12.00 noon, Monkey Island Hotel.

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
**Visit**

Leighton House, & Florence Nightingale  
 Museum, London

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010  
**Talk** Geoffrey Tyack

“The New Berkshire Pevsner”  
 Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010  
**Talk** by Peter Quarmby, followed by **AGM**

“Climate Change and Flooding on the Thames”  
 Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

## CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

President of the Trustees	John McIntosh, 26 Harvest Hill Road, SL6 2QQ	633259
Hon. Secretary	Vacancy	
Hon. Treasurer	Trevor Farnfield, Ditton Meads, Winter Hill Road, SL6 6NS	638142
Executive Chairman	Bob Dulson, Bryher, Islet Road, SL6 8HT	627130
Planning Group	Martin McNamee, 14 Lower Cookham Road, SL6 8JT	623203
Projects Group	Ann Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
Communications Group	Brian Darracott, 6 Medallion Place, SL6 1TF	620280
Events Group	Tina Sell, Marlborough, River Road, Taplow, SL6 0BB	628675
Outings Sec.	Mike Copeland, 14 Laburnham Road, SL6 4DB	634181
Membership Sec.	Shashi Dare, Silvretta, Islet Road, SL6 8LD	629976
Newsletter Distribution	Carol Innes, Contour, Briar Glen, Cookham Rise, SL6 9JP	532418

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2010

Parish Centre in St. Luke's Church, at 7.45 pm.

12<sup>th</sup> January, 9<sup>th</sup> February, 9<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 14<sup>th</sup> December

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS FOR 2010

Parish Centre in St. Luke's Church, at 7.45 p.m.

13<sup>th</sup> April, 12<sup>th</sup> October

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2010 in the Wesley Hall at the Methodist Church at 7.45 pm.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue  
 of the Newsletter is 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010.**

---

**News Editor**     **Brian Darracott**  
 6 Medallion Place, Maidenhead, SL6 1TF (01628 620280)