



Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS



Issue 1/11

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Yet more street clutter!

See page 3 for the story on the proposal for a host of advertising banners

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Chairman's Foreword

Welcome to a new year with the Civic Society which began for us, as the last one finished, with the new buzzword – “Localism”. More involvement is promised, more responsiveness. But will it really be as “laissez faire” as the PR implies?

Information is coming from all angles. Even social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook are being used to break news. So trying to get a handle on what actually is being decided is difficult. What is clear is that communities will have the opportunity to devise their own local plan, if they so wish. Each of these area plans would combine to provide one pan-Borough Local Plan. However, before you dash to the phone, be aware that such plans will still require the same levels of justification, tests of soundness and sustainability and comprehensive supporting evidence base as previous plans. As an example, the Maidenhead town centre plan runs to 3,000 pages. No surprise then that the planners have yet to meet anyone who's said: “I want to do my own plan.” The Council is considering a model that will divide the Borough into seven Mini-Plan areas involving 13 Neighbourhood Action Groups. Whether these are driven by the communities themselves or by the local authority, a concern we have is that all this new activity and engagement will increase the workload of a planning department which, already stretched, is to be squeezed for further efficiency savings, with talk of 20% to 25% reductions in resources.

“Localism” will bring opportunities as well as pitfalls. With this in mind, the Society has revived its regular quarterly meetings with the planning department.

As you'll see on page 7 of this Edition, PRoM is getting a new chairman to take the town centre action plan towards the delivery phase. Graeme Tulley is a much-respected figure in town centre planning and regeneration. Graeme has also accepted my invitation to be the guest speaker at the next Civic Society Luncheon.

I'm sure every member will want to join me in sending best wishes to Carol Innes who because of ill health has had to relinquish the role she's carried out so ably for so many years, overseeing the newsletter distribution. We wish you good luck Carol and a speedy recovery. In her stead, I'm delighted that member Sue Ross has stepped readily into the breach to ensure that this and future editions reach you on time. And the job of east area distributor, which Dorothy Rowley was doing, has been taken over by Brian Smith, one of our trustees. We are grateful to them both. My thanks too, and apologies, to Renu Gujral who religiously assists the Planning Group in helping to sift the applications they consider, a fact which I neglected to mention in my annual report in November.

I know that after the jostle and jingle of Christmas some people find January dull. Well, not on the Civic Society's executive committee, it ain't. So if you know someone who needs to brighten their day – in any month – by being more actively involved in the Society, then let us know, please. Maybe it's you...

Bob Dulson

Planning Matters

In the last Newsletter we reported on the proposals to re-develop the office building at 27 and 29 Market Street – the Regus Building, also known as Albany House. The application was passed with a number of conditions which related to detailed aspects of the plans. In essence, a nine-storey office building is to be built on the southwestern quadrant of the Cookham Road roundabout. This may well be the first of several similar applications in the West Street Opportunity Area. One view is that significant office development will assist the regeneration of the town centre. However, there is currently an oversupply of office space in Maidenhead, and it is questionable as to whether the long-term demand for offices can be realistically forecast. Whilst the advent of Crossrail and the continued popularity of Maidenhead are positives, the ongoing economic downturn is combined with changes in working place patterns (more homeworking etc). Of course more offices will generate increased footfall for our retailers – but not if they are empty!

Over the past three months nearly fifty planning applications have been reviewed in detail by the Planning Group and comments have been made on twelve proposals. The Texaco filling station by Maidenhead Bridge submitted an over-the-top signage proposal which has subsequently been scaled down. The most significant individual proposal was in respect of 12/14 Craufurd Rise, where a pair of Victorian villas were to be demolished and replaced by a “Shoppenhangers” style apartment block of 28 flats. There has been considerable local opposition to this and the decision is keenly awaited.

Flying the flag – for what, for whom?

Members of the Planning Group are deeply sceptical about plans to fly advertising banners from more than 90 lampposts in and around the town centre. The scheme is being promoted as a revenue raiser for the council but for the Society it raises only questions.

“We have serious concerns about how the banners will be used, as well as the effect on the environment, the appearance of the town and road safety,” said Martin McNamee, chairman of the planning group.

Two planning applications (10/02985 & 10/02977) have been submitted for the installation of 96 banners on the Bridge Road and Braywick Road approaches to the town centre, along St Cloud, Bad Godesberg and Frascati Ways and in parts of the town centre including High Street, King Street and Queen Street. The Group has submitted comments, by way of an objection, as follows:

“Comments on Application 10/02985 - Consent to display 79 non illuminated lamp post banner signs – Bridge Road, Bad Godesberg, St Cloud and Frascati Ways, Grenfell Island and High Street.

It is appreciated that the Borough is looking for additional revenue streams, but this proposal will be severely detrimental to the street scene on the approach roads to Maidenhead. It is part of an overall proposal for 96 banners in and around the town.

Such banners are more appropriate in a city environment, where they can add interest and colour. We enjoy a suburban/semi-rural location in Maidenhead, with grass verges and mature trees on the approach to town. This multitude of advertising banners will detract from and clash with this cherished setting. They will certainly not conserve and enhance the environs, which is a key objective of local planning policy.

Government guidelines are being introduced to reduce the level of street “clutter”. This proposal will fly in the face of such a policy. The advertising will be a distraction for motorists, and therefore a safety hazard. Perhaps the location should be limited to the town centre which has lower traffic speeds or is pedestrianised. The Highways Department should be more concerned with road safety than with revenue raising. We would prefer to see the utilisation of available central government funds for tree planting initiatives to improve our environment.



The banner outside the library – one of several in St Ives Road

We are concerned at the editorial control of the messages carried by the banners. Will they be Maidenhead specific? Will the Oracle in Reading or The Eden Centre be permitted to advertise to the detriment of Maidenhead businesses. Will they carry national advertising? Will all banners be in use all of the time? The applicant (Bay Media)’s proposal letter is very light on information. It claims positive feedback from the general public on the existing banners in town. Where is the evidence? We would point out that these banners (primarily for the fostering service) have been installed without any planning permission. On Application 10/02985 we note that only two banners are proposed for St Ives Road – yet there are currently banners along the entire length. Are these to be retained or removed? We also note that

Broadway is included in the proposals, but not in the listed locations on the application heading.

This is an excessive proposal for a perceived short-term gain. The long-term protection of such public amenity space is the priority.”

The Society, however, is pleased to see that the applications have been called in to the Development Control Panel for scrutiny.

Area Action Plan

The second consultation on the Area Action Plan regarding the regeneration of Maidenhead was undertaken in November. Not surprisingly, we are broadly in support of the proposals, and our response is also reproduced below.

“Feedback on Local Development Framework / Area Action Plan

We have commented previously on the Draft proposals for the Area Action Plan. There can be no doubt that the proposals are justified because the current situation relating to Maidenhead Town Centre must be addressed. The real weakness lies in the effectiveness – not in flexibility or monitoring – but in deliverability. Is it achievable and what is the time scale?

The key is the relationship between retail expansion, office development, residential diversity and the augmentation of leisure amenity. This combination will demand improvement in public transport, combined with the flow of both vehicles and people through and within the town centre.

The coverage of transport issues is limited. Of all the designated Opportunity Areas the Railway Station / Transport Hub is the most critical. The Railway Station is severely strapped for expansion space. The integration of public transport with a combined rail and bus station is a priority. A regular (preferably free) shuttle bus service should service the main retail and office locations in the town. With the advent of Crossrail the Railway Station complex will become an ever greater focus.

The other Opportunity Areas should be ranked in order of priority. It is unlikely that they can be delivered at the same pace. Some can be delivered in 3-5 years; others may take over 15 years. With the likelihood of ongoing economic pressures we should focus on one area at a time radiating from the Station. The Broadway/King Street/Queen Street triangle is probably the second priority after the Railway Station.

The town will have major problems with traffic flow. The West Street Opportunity Area must have a second entry/exit possibly with a one-way system. The flow of buses through the town from the Railway Station should avoid St. Ives Road and Bridge Avenue by continuing east along the High Street past the Colonnade. St. Ives Road should become public open space, and Bridge Avenue made two way – with no bus stands (as it will no longer be on the bus routes).

Likely increased traffic congestion in the Railway Station area will be reduced by developing the Southern relief road via Stafferton Way. This will reduce through traffic and allow the Grenfell Island / Station Approach area to be reconfigured.

In essence, the AAP is a comprehensive and valid attempt to address some of the major ongoing problems of Maidenhead. It should therefore be endorsed. The biggest risk is in being overambitious and too far-reaching. It must be deliverable, affordable, and enforceable (with CPO powers if necessary) – but what is the realistic timescale?”

The planning environment is in a state of some turmoil following various initiatives from the coalition government. Housing targets as set in the South East Plan have been dropped, although the plan itself will not be jettisoned until 2012. The Royal Borough of Windsor Maidenhead is a “vanguard” Authority and “localism” is everywhere. As mentioned in the Chairman’s foreword, there is a certain air of uncertainty, and we will be following events with great interest!

PRoM Re-Groups For Town Centre Regeneration

As the Maidenhead Masterplan nears completion, the Partnership for the Rejuvenation of Maidenhead (PRoM) is to welcome one of the UK’s leading urban regeneration experts as its new chairman – in readiness for the delivery phase.



*l to r: Cllr David Burbage, Graeme Tulley, Bob Dulson & Cllr Simon Werner
(photo courtesy RBWM Communications Dept.)*

A specialist in major town centre regeneration projects with 30 years’ experience in planning and development, Graeme Tulley has already been a key figure in the

preparation of the Masterplan, or Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) as it is properly called.

Graeme led the team of consultants which has advised PRoM and the Council as they drew up first the vision, then the action plan and supporting evidence over the last three years. Now he has agreed to join PRoM to take the plan forward on a voluntary basis.

“This is really very good news for Maidenhead,” says Bob Dulson who as the Society’s representative, has been PRoM’s independent chairman since its inception. “Graeme is one of the most respected practitioners in his field and the fact that he’s so willingly come forward to lead the group speaks volumes for the plan and the future of Maidenhead. As we moved towards the delivery phase, we felt it would be sensible and advantageous to re-shape PRoM to introduce a new set of skills and expertise suited to the task. In assuming the role of chairman in my stead, Graeme reflects this new emphasis. I’m personally delighted that he has agreed to come on board.”

Graeme’s arrival is one of a number of changes being proposed to the PRoM line-up. Architect Philip Tilbury who is chairman of RBWM’s Design Review Panel will be another new face, and others are planned. Bob becomes deputy chairman. Care is being taken to ensure that PRoM continues to maintain strong links with the local community and is evenly cross-party, as well as being independently chaired. Both party leaders have given their support to the re-vamp and it has the backing of council officers.

The AAP was submitted to the government for approval on December 30th. Still to come, at the end of March, is a public examination by a government inspector. If it gets the go-ahead the AAP will then be formally adopted in the autumn. A final public consultation, which closed on November 25th, drew a total of 499 comments from 98 respondents, which were broadly supportive.

NB: Would you like to meet Graeme Tulley? There’s a chance for Civic Society members and their guests to do just when he comes as the guest speaker to our next Civic Society Luncheon in April. See page 19 for details.

Design Awards: Raising awareness of good building design

Entries nominated by members of the Civic Society’s planning group won two prizes and two commendations in the RBWM Design Awards announced at the end of January. The Awards scheme, originally initiated by the Civic Society in the 1970s, was taken over by the Borough and ran biennially until five years ago when it lapsed. It was revived last year after lobbying from the Windsor & Eton Society and ourselves.

The Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham, which re-opened last year after a £1m refurbishment was put forward by both Martin McNamee and Michael Johnson and it took first prize in the Renovations & Extensions category.

The judges loved it and said it was very well done, making the most of a small space on a small site. The Gallery (right) was also commended in the section for buildings in an historic setting or conservation area. (Take note: The Society has a visit to the Gallery planned in April.)



The second winner, also in Cookham and nominated by Michael for the New Build award, was the Sir Bernard

Miller Centre, a conference facility at the Odney Club. Of this the judges said it was excellent overall. The interior design lifted the spirits. They also liked its versatile space, sustainability and the way it responded so well to the existing landscape of the Odney Gardens. The Odney building was also nominated in the Sustainable Design section but the prize there went to the Science Building at Berks College of Agriculture for an astonishing array of eco-friendly qualities, including laminated timber construction, its use of natural light, sedum roof and rainwater harvesting.

Our third nomination was for the Stubbings sponsored roundabout at Maidenhead Thicket. Martin put this one forward in the Open Space category as being representative of the way the Council's sponsorship scheme for roundabouts works so well in creating a good impression at gateways to the town. It was honoured with a commendation. The winner in this section was Grenfell Park which has been renovated and transformed recently.

The final category for buildings in an historic setting or conservation area was won by Lewandowski Wilcox Ltd, a firm of architects, for the refurbishment and conversion of their offices in High Street, Eton.

To increase public interest in the Awards, a People's Choice Award was included for the first time this year. This attracted 300 votes on-line and by post and the prize went to Upton House School in Windsor, a new build with a distinctive art-deco look.

The awards ceremony in the Town Hall at the end of January was well attended. Presenting the prizes, Cllr Alison Knight, lead member for Planning & Development, said the scheme had been a great success, helping to raise awareness of the importance of good building design. She added that she looked forward to the next competition in two years time.

Martin McNamee & Bob Dulson

The Almshouses of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk

In March we are touring three almshouses that are linked to William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, who was murdered in 1450 while en route to exile in Burgundy; specifically, he was beheaded in a rowing boat after his ship was stopped in the English Channel. Why? Because he was blamed for the loss of English possessions in Anjou and Maine when a deal he had made as part of the marriage arrangements for his king (Henry VI) to Margaret of Anjou went wrong. The new Queen's father, René of Anjou, ignored his agreement to a 20-year truce with the English and helped his brother-in-law, King Charles VII of France, to kick the English out of Normandy.

Our reason for the tour is the same as that for last year's trip to St Laurence's Church and Upton Court: to help publicise the fact that the setting of Ockwells Manor is under threat. As reported in recent Newsletters, the National Trust are currently opposing an application in the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) seeking to vary the restrictive covenant as held by the Trust, to permit residential development on the land to the north of Ockwells Road. There will be more news on this in late April but in the meantime we will continue highlighting the concern. Those who visited Upton Court, last December, will have seen the result of loss of setting.

The connection between these almshouses and Ockwells Manor house is that armorial stained glass for William de la Pole and his wife Alice Chaucer (granddaughter of Geoffrey Chaucer and a considerable heiress) can still be seen located in the great hall at Ockwells, situated between armorials for Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou signifying his role in arranging the marriage. William's link with the three almshouses we will visit is described below.

William was Alice's third husband. When very young she was married, probably in 1414, to Sir John Phelip, but he died the following year at Harfleur. She then married Sir Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury who lived at Bisham Abbey. He died after being shot at the siege of Orleans in 1428, following which in 1430 Alice married his second in command, William de la Pole, then Earl of Suffolk, who had fought with the forces of Henry V in France and been defeated by Joan of Arc. Alice's parents were Thomas Chaucer and Maud Burghersh. Maud, an heiress brought Ewelme to the marriage and it was where they lived.

The Almshouses

Almshouses were founded to make provision for poor men and women of slender means. The patrons who founded them laid down in the Statutes, specific details of prayers to be said for themselves, their parents and their king. The three we will be visiting have all been modernised so reducing the number of units but nevertheless, after hundreds of years, are still fulfilling their original function.

Donnington Hospital (managed by the Donnington Hospital Trust)

William de la Pole was Patron with his wife, Alice Chaucer, in the fifteenth century. The hospital was founded by Sir Richard Abberbury in 1393, during the reign of Richard II. Abberbury also built nearby Donnington Castle (the gatehouse remains). This castle was bought by Alice's father, Thomas Chaucer, in 1415, as a residence for her when she married her first husband Sir John Phelip.

In later years, Edmund de la Pole, grandson of William and Alice, rebelled against Henry VII and lost his estates, including Donnington, to the Crown in 1503. In 1545 all colleges, hospitals and fraternities were granted to the Crown but as the hospital was already in Royal ownership, the Act had no effect on the hospital.

In an additional link to Bisham, in Tudor times Elizabeth I made Lady (Elizabeth) Hoby Keeper of Donnington Castle in 1590 and then in 1600 gave the castle and patronage of the almshouse to Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham and High Admiral of England, who had fought the Spanish Fleet in 1588. Lady Hoby considered she was still Keeper and trouble ensued. The portrait of this redoubtable lady still hangs in the Great Hall of Bisham Abbey where she lived with her husband Thomas Hoby.



Donnington Hospital - rebuilt in the 17th century

Due to its decayed state, the original building, housing twelve poor men, was rebuilt by Howard, the grant of re-foundation being signed by Elizabeth I in 1602 in return for a red rose annually from the Lord of the Manor (a tradition still maintained). The hospital was renamed as *The Hospital of Queen Elizabeth in Donnington*. Unfortunately the building was destroyed in the Civil War. The present building is the mid-seventeenth century rebuild. In the twentieth century more almshouses were built and opened by Elizabeth II in 1993. In 2009 Jesus Hospital in Bray was taken under the Trust's management.

Long Alley Almshouse (managed by Christ's Hospital)

William de la Pole was a founder member and titular head of the Guild of the Holy Cross at Abingdon, attached to St Helen's Church, and incorporated from a Fraternity of the same name in 1441. His father-in-law, Thomas Chaucer (d.1434) had been a member of the earlier fraternity. The licence founding the Guild says it was for

"...the repair of the road which extends from Abyndon, co. Berks towards Dorchestre, co. Oxford, and over the water of the Thames through Burford and Culhamford between the said towns, by which road the King's lieges have had carriage and free passage save when it is flooded so that none can attempt it without peril of his life and loss of his goods..."

and also

"...to found a perpetual Gild of themselves and others, both men and women in the parish church of St Helen, Abyndon, for thirteen poor, weak and impotent men and women, to pray for the good estate of the King and of the brethren and sisters of the Gild and their benefactors and for the souls of the King and the brethren, sisters and benefactors aforesaid, after death and of their parents, and for two chaplains to celebrate divine service..."



Long Alley Almshouse

Long Alley Almshouse was built in 1446/7 to house the thirteen men and women. Donnington and Ewelme (see below) are built round a central quadrangle whereas this building is a single line of units with a central hall. The Guild ceased during the Reformation but another Royal Charter of 1553 created Christ's Hospital that has been responsible since then for administering the almshouse. Between 1605 and 1618 the porches and lantern were added and additional almshouses were built in the eighteenth century.

St Helen's Church (right) next to the almshouse was the spiritual home of the Guild that built two of its aisles (it has five aisles and has recently been spectacularly re-ordered). The room over the north porch was the Guild's Exchequer and is soon to house the church archives. No. 32 East St Helens Street was the Brotherhood House of the Guild



given to them by William Dyer (d.1440), Vicar of Bray, whose father Richard had owned the house. This and other bequests by William Dyer allowed the Guild to build the almshouse and a market cross (now lost). A memorial brass for William Dyer can still be seen in St Michael's Church, Bray.

Another founder member of the Abingdon Guild was John Norreys Esq who built Ockwells Manor house ca.1450 and who founded a similar Guild in Maidenhead in 1451. Both Guilds were responsible for maintaining roads and bridges, and in both places still, over half a century later, the newly installed Mayor processes from the Guildhall to the church (St Helens, Abingdon: St Mary's, Maidenhead) for a Civic Service.

Ewelme Almshouse (*God's House at Ewelme*, managed by the Ewelme Trust)

In 1437 William de la Pole and his wife Alice Chaucer obtained a royal licence to found *God's House* at their manor of Ewelme. The manors endowed for the upkeep of the almshouse are still maintained by the Trustees today.

William had married Alice in 1430, after the death of her second husband Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, in 1428. A few years later still Alice's father, Thomas, died (1434) and her mother, Matilda Burghersh (d.1436), possibly prompting William and Alice to rebuilt the church at Ewelme (only the tower remains of the original church) and add an almshouse and school.



Ewelme Almshouse founded 1437, built by 1448. The bargeboards on the porches are very similar to those of Ockwells Manor build ca. 1450

The Statutes of Ewelme Almshouse were written around 1448-1450 as they refer to William as Duke: he became Duke in 1448, for his role in arranging the marriage of Henry VI to Margaret of Anjou, and was murdered in 1450. A fifteenth century copy of the Statutes can be seen in what was the Common Hall of the almshouse, now used as a vestry. Until the fifteenth century all statutes of religious foundations were drawn up in Latin. Ewelme statutes are among the first sets written in English and from this time onwards English became the rule for almshouse statutes.

The charity was responsible for the almshouse, the school and St John's Chapel in St Mary's Church that adjoins the almshouse, which appears to have been built initially as a memorial chapel to William and Alice's parents and kinsmen.

The Statutes record that "*...we William and Alice aforesaid built, erected and founded a house of alms for 2 priests and 13 poor men in our manor and lordship of Ewelme in the county of Oxford annexed unto the churchyard of the parish church of Ewelme*". One priest became the Master or parson, the first being Sir John Seynesbury who was overseer of the building work of both the church and almshouse, described in the statutes *as lately and for a long time parson at Ewelme*. There is a brass memorial plaque for him at the west end of the south aisle. The second priest was to be responsible for the teaching of grammar – to teach children of Ewelme and of all estates possessed by the almshouse for free.

The Statutes go on to say "*...so that the Master is well able to exhort and counsel the poor men for their salvation and comfort he should be a learned man from Oxford University over 30 winters old...*" (the position of Master eventually became a sinecure appointment, though the link with Oxford University remains; uproar was caused in later years when Gladstone appointed a Cambridge man!)

Preference was given to poor men who were tenants of the lordship of Ewelme and other lordships in Oxon and Berks, men in the service of the founders and men in manors belonging to the almshouse.

One of the poor men to be chosen as “Minister” was responsible for ringing the almshouse bell and acting as warden of the almshouse, including locking the gates at night. All almsmen received a wage, the “Minister” receiving an enhanced one. The duty of the almsmen and priests was to daily pray for both the living and the dead. The Statutes specify that the first prayers each day were for the king, Henry VI; the founders, William and Alice, and all Christian people. They also prayed for the founders’ fathers and mothers. Also every day after Mass and after Compline everyone who could had to gather together round the tomb of Thomas and Maud Chaucer to say prayers in Latin and following this, the Master or Teacher or one of brothers should pray in English “...*during the lives of our sovereign lord (i.e. Henry VI) and us both (i.e. William and Alice),God save in body and soul our sovereign lord the king, my Lord William Duke of Suffolk, my lady Alice Duchesse of Suffolk his wife, our founders. My lord John their son and all Christian people*”.

The Statutes lay down various conditions for almsmen including: if they were late for prayers wages were docked; if absent they received no wages because “*they shall not say their prayers because life in the outer world shall corrupt the purity of their devotion and because their empty seats in church shall dishonour the almshouse*”. The able bodied poor men were to help the decrepit and no-one “*is to take a woman into their chamber through whom suspicion and slander will fall on the house*”.

The almshouse appears to have escaped suppression in the Reformation as it was already a Royal possession due to the rebellion of William de La Pole’s grandson Edmund against Henry VII (beheaded in 1513) which meant the family estates, including Ewelme (and Donnington) were then appropriated by the Crown. Interestingly in 1519 Anne Broke (widow) and Henry Norrys Esq were granted land held by Edmund in Swyncombe (near Ewelme) and Ewelme itself on a 21-year lease. Anne is buried in the church but Henry, great grandson of John Norreys Esq of Ockwells, was beheaded (in 1536 - see below). His head may have been buried in the chapel at Ockwells.

St Mary’s Church

The church was rebuilt by William de la Pole and Alice; only the tower remains of the original church.

The almshouse is responsible for St John’s Chapel that houses the tombs of Alice’s parents Thomas Chaucer and Maud Burghersh. The tomb appears to have been moved to its present position. This chapel seems to have been a memorial chapel for their parents and kinsmen. Heraldic glass at the apex of its east window represents the coats of both their parents together with two for Alice’s royal connection: Joan Beaufort (d.1440; daughter of John of Gaunt by Katherine Roet) was her father’s cousin, and was married to Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland (d.1425).



St Mary's Church Ewelme with the almshouse in the foreground

Joan inherited her husband's estates (instead of his son by his first wife) and made sure her children married well. Her son, Richard Neville, married Alice Montacute, daughter of Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury (by his first wife Elinor Holland; Alice Chaucer was second wife) and became Earl of Salisbury in her right. They lived at Bisham Abbey. Their son, Richard Neville (the Kingmaker), also of Bisham, became Earl of Warwick in right of his wife, Anne Beauchamp, making it three generations in a row of men made more powerful by their wives.

Alice died in 1475 and her own tomb was placed between the chapel and the chancel. Either the craftsmen got the measurements wrong or it has been moved, as it has clearly been cut to fit. The effigy bears the Garter on the left forearm which she was given permission to wear "*at the ensuing Feast of St George, 1432*"; William had been made Knight of the Garter by Henry V in 1420 when only 24.

The Norreys Connection

St Mary's also contains memorials to the Norreys (Norrys) family. At the west end of the nave is a memorial brass for Edward who was great great grandson of John Norreys Esq of Ockwells and son of Henry Norreys Esq. He died in 1529, at the age of five, when his father was bailiff of Ewelme and, with Anne Broke, had a lease of Ewelme lands, previously held by the De La Pole family. His father, Sir Henry

Norreys, great grandson of John Norreys Esq of Ockwells, was beheaded in 1536 for *undue familiarity* with Anne Boleyn.

The Anne Broke mentioned above is also related to the Norreys family and a memorial to Thomas Broke (d.1518), her husband, and Anne occurs in the church near to the chancel. She was a Bulstrode and the brass figure representing Anne is very similar to the brasses for the wives of Edward Bulstrode (d.1517), that we saw last year in St Laurence's Church, Upton by Chalvey. It is likely their ancestor was William Bulstrode who married Agnes (sister of John Norreys Esq of Ockwells). Anne's armorial shield (Bulstrode quartering Shobbington), on a brass above her figure, is identical to one that was once in St Laurence's Church, as part of a memorial to William Bulstrode and his wife, Agnes. The same shield can still be seen in the armorial glass of Ockwells Manor.

Anne was undoubtedly therefore related to Sir Henry Norryys who, after Thomas Broke's death, took over, in 1520, as bailiff and woodward of the lordship of Ewelme and keeper of the park.



Edward Bulstrode (d.1517) and two of his wives in St Laurence's Church, Upton by Chalvey



Thomas Broke (d.1518) and his wife Anne Bulstrode in St Mary's Church, Ewelme

A final note: in the graveyard are buried the author Jerome K. Jerome and the broadcaster Raymond Baxter.

Ann Darracott

Events

FORTHCOMING TALKS

The talks take place in the Methodist Hall, King Street, Maidenhead, unless otherwise noted. 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 Royal Landscape of Windsor Great Park, Past and Present By Roger Askew. Wednesday 16th February 2011

From the time of the Saxon and Norman kings, Windsor Great Park was been a favourite royal hunting area, then from the time of Charles II it became a royal retreat and country estate. George III, known as “Farmer George”, introduced farming - now continued by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth - and his son George IV turned it into a lavish pleasure ground. The largest open space in the south of England, its 4,800 acres are once again home to a herd of red deer, and it is the most important site in northern Europe for ancient oak trees. In recent years the development of its magnificent public gardens – The Savill Garden and The Valley Gardens – has opened it up to visitors.

Roger is currently a Member of the Friends and Volunteer Guide at The Savill Gardens, Windsor Great Park and Founder Chairperson of the Stoke Poges Society. He and his wife, Barbara, run Windsor Heritage Talks and Tours, which organises walking and coach tours in Windsor and the Thames Valley, with related talks.

Lecture on the work of Stanley Spencer – War Artist Wednesday 20th April 2011, 7.00pm - 8.00pm At the Stanley Spencer Gallery, Cookham

Where better to learn about this local artist than the Cookham Gallery, which bears his name. This is a second visit to the Gallery to see a new exhibition. **So please note that the talk will not take place in the usual venue nor at the usual time.** Spencer was one of the most original artists of the twentieth century and the new exhibition is a showing of some of his paintings from the period as a War Artist in the Clyde Shipyards.

On our previous visit in 2008, a group of us thought we would make the evening more of a social occasion and met in the Kings Arms nearby after the lecture for some supper. It was a successful evening so we thought we might repeat the experience. Book a table ahead and join a group of us for a chat. The entrance fee for the lecture is £6.00 per person (£5.00 for Concessions) and it will commence at 7.00 pm and last for about one hour.

If you wish to attend please contact Tina Sell by email: tinasell43@hotmail.co.uk or phone 01628 628675. It would be wise to book before Friday 8th April as places are limited.

CIVIC SOCIETY LUNCHEON – A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

The next Civic Society Luncheon is planned for Friday 8th April 2011 and is one that no-one with an interest in the future of Maidenhead will want to miss.

Our guest is Graeme Tulley, the newly appointed chairman of PRoM (see story on page 6) and this will be his first public engagement since taking the role. We meet in Maidenhead Rowing Club, a first for this event, with its excellent views of the bridge and river. Graeme's involvement in the preparation of the Maidenhead Town Centre Masterplan precedes even the creation of PRoM. As a consultant he has been advising the Borough's planners from the outset. Now he will be steering the plan through the delivery phase. Where better to learn about the future than within a stone's throw of one of our most historic locations, Maidenhead Bridge. Use the enclosed booking form to reserve your place. Come along and bring a friend.

OUTINGS AND VISITS

Our most recent trip was to St Laurence's Church, Upton by Chalvey and the adjoining medieval manor house of Upton Court where, on a bitterly cold day, we enjoyed the warmth and hospitality of the church. Many thanks to Alan James and Ken Bryant of St Laurence's and to Angela Tuddenham of Slough Civic Society who showed us round the manor house – and not forgetting the ladies who produced a splendid cream tea. Upton Court provided a vivid example of what happens to a historic building when it loses its setting. One of the reasons for the outing to Upton was to publicise the threat to the setting of Ockwells Manor (the sister of the builder of Ockwells is buried at St Laurence's). The next outing will also be used to highlight this concern. On Saturday 26th March we have arranged a visit to three ancient almshouses: **Donnington Hospital**, the **Long Alley Almshouse** in Abingdon and **Ewelme Almshouse** also visiting St Helen's Church, Abingdon and St Mary's Church, Ewelme – for the connection of these places with Ockwells see the article on pages 9-16. These charming old almshouses are not normally open to the public and we will be given an introduction to the each house by one of the local wardens or trustees. There'll also be time for lunch whilst in Abingdon.

This will be followed on Sunday 15th May with a visit to **Penshurst Place** and **Squerryes Court**. Penshurst Place is near Tonbridge and is a family owned stately home dating from the medieval times. Squerryes Court is in nearby Westerham and is another family-owned property. It was built in 1681 and is a typical William and Mary manor house. Both of these properties are set in beautiful gardens.

Details of both these visits are on the enclosed booking forms. ***Please take note of the deadlines and return your booking form promptly to help avoid cancellations due to lack of timely support.***

And finally, to whet your appetite: we have arranged for a private tour of Taplow Court and Grounds on the morning of Saturday 11th June, and another private tour of Eton College on the morning of Sunday 10th July. Further details of these will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Announcements

NEWS FROM THE HERITAGE CENTRE

The Heritage Centre's campaign to raise £150,000 for its "Grandma Flew Spitfires!" project and associated improvements to the museum building in Park Street has passed the £90,000 mark. Civic Society members who may wish to contribute to this exciting phase of the Heritage Centre's development are invited to call in at Park Street or visit www.justgiving.com/grandmaflewspitfires. Meanwhile the first improvements have already been made with the installation of a new air conditioning system in the ground floor galleries.

Forthcoming exhibitions and events are:

FLOOD! - 10 February to 27 March 2011

The worst Thames flood ever recorded was in 1894, which is the starting point for this exhibition featuring several post-war floods in the Maidenhead area. The worst of these was in March 1947, when the Thames at Maidenhead was out of its banks for two weeks, and the British and American armies helped with rescue and relief efforts. The exhibition features photographs from all these flooding events and cautions against assuming the Jubilee River will protect Maidenhead from any flood, however severe.

Maidenhead Painting Club Annual Exhibition - 31 March to 16 April 2011

Paintings by talented local arts on display and for sale

Maidenhead and the Movies - 21 April to 12 June 2011

An exhibition celebrating a film heritage which stretches from Ivor Novello and James Mason via Hammer Horror, Gerry Anderson and Carry On! to Kate Winslet and other Oscar winners.

30 minute lunchtime talks

These talks, at 12.45pm on the second Thursday of every month, cover a wide range of topics and are open to all comers.

Further details of these and other activities can be found in the Maidenhead Advertiser or at www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk, or obtained from the Heritage Centre: 01628 780555, or by e-mailing info@maidenheadheritage.org.uk.

Dates For Your Diary

Wednesday 16 th February 2011 Talk by Roger Askew	“The Royal Landscape of Windsor Great Park” Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm
Saturday 26 th March 2011 Visit	Tour of Berkshire Almshouses – Donnington Abingdon and Ewelme
Friday 8 th April 2011 Event	The Civic Society Luncheon, with Guest speaker Graeme Tulley, Chairman of ProM
Wednesday 20 th April 2011 Talk/Visit	Stanley Spencer – War Artist Stanley Spencer Gallery, Cookham, 7.00 pm
Sunday 15 th May 2011 Visit	Penshurst Place and Squerryes Court, Kent
Saturday morning 11 th June 2011 Visit	Private tour of Taplow Court and Grounds
Sunday morning 10 th July 2011 Visit	Private tour of Eton College
Wednesday 21 st September 2011 Talk by Roger Bettridge	“Lord Desborough of Taplow Court” 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, The Mill House, 35 Mill Road, Marlow, SL7 1QB	471472
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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	Sue Ross, Castle Hill Lodge, St Marks Road, SL6 6DG	626849

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2011

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

11th January, 8th February, 8th March, 11th May, 14th June, 12th July, 13th September, 8th November, 13th December

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS FOR 2011

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

12th April, 11th October

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 16th November 2011 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 8th April 2011.**

News Editor **Brian Darracott**
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