



Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS

Issue 2/09

May 2009



What has this picture got to do with Maidenhead? See page 14

Regular features on Talks, Outings, Projects and Planning

Visit our website! : www.maidenheadcivicsoc.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

It seems like five minutes but it's five years since a few stout-hearted souls from the Society set about compiling our Strategic Review, using the views and ideas of members to pull together a documentary picture Maidenhead as we would like to see it.

The motivation was that the Council was about to embark on the preparation of its own "vision" for the future of the town and the borough, or so we thought. What we didn't foresee at the time was that their process – which, of course, applied to every other local authority too – was so heavily prescribed by Whitehall bureaucrats that the end result would be about as stimulating as a wet sock.

What we'd been expecting and looking forward to was something exciting, something visionary, a plan for the future.

A few years earlier, at one of those American-style motivation seminars for BBC managers, Greg Dyke, their plain speaking director general, had urged staff to spurn bureaucracy and scythe through inertia, with the phrase "cut the crap and make it happen". It was characteristic of Dyke to use what was TV's 26th most offensive word at the time. But looking at the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework (LDF) process, I wanted to say the same.

It was only thanks to our former planning chair Nigel Cockburn and his aptitude for forensic-like analysis that we got anywhere near the heart of the matter. Ultimately, of course, the Core Strategy, the document at the heart of the LDF, was deemed unsound in a number of respects and had to go back to the drawing board.

Now, as the Americans say, we're about to "start over". (Only slightly less offensive to me than "for free"!) You will have received a document from the Council, called *Local Development Framework Community Consultation*, asking for your views on where development should go and when it should be built. I hope you've taken the opportunity to respond. There was a bigger, fuller Options paper with another half dozen questions available from the Town Hall or online but the one delivered to every household raised the key question.

As anticipated in our last Newsletter, it asked: faced with the need to build more homes and not enough land, should we go for high, medium or low density. High, having the least impact on Green Belt, and low, the most. The dilemma for many Maidenheadians of course is that by voting to save the Green Belt they're effectively giving the thumbs up to building in back gardens. But it need not be so. Neither does high density have to mean high-rise. Some of the country's densest housing is in Kensington and Chelsea's elegant Regency Terraces. So preserving character and the need for flexibility would seem to be key.

But this is just the beginning. The next consultation will be about the Waterways regeneration and there'll be a lot more to come over the next 18 months. All this has spurred us to revise our own Strategic Review, which we plan to publish at the appropriate time. As ever, your thoughts and comments for that would be welcome.

It feels a bit like going to the cinema...isn't this where we came in? Only this time we will be watching it all through again – just as closely.

Bob Dulson - Chairman

PLANNING MATTERS

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Over the last three months the Planning Group has considered approximately 50 applications which appeared to be of potential interest. Comments were submitted to the Planning Authorities on 8 of the proposals. In most cases there was no cause for comment, whilst in other situations the Group felt that it should be “left to the neighbours” to register their views.

STIEFEL LABORATORIES

The major project to come forward in recent weeks is for the redevelopment of the existing Stiefel Laboratories building at Whitebrook Park on Lower Cookham Road. This was originally the De La Rue site before it was developed into an office park in the early 90’s. At the time there was considerable local concern about green-belt issues and increases in traffic levels. The main feature of the site is the Hitachi building, which is well landscaped and set back from the road. To the rear of the Hitachi building is another block previously occupied by Stiefel Laboratories. We understand that the site has been vacated and there is a proposal from the landlords to demolish the existing two-storey building, and replace it with a considerably larger three-storey block.



The empty Stiefel Laboratory building at Whitebrook Place

The position of the enlarged building will be much closer to the southeast boundary and the residential properties in Islet Park Drive. Car parking will be increased significantly and will generate an additional 200 movements in the morning and evening peaks. Although the site is just south of the North Maidenhead flood bund, the increase in footprint and hardstanding must be a cause of major concern on flood related issues. To the north and east of the site is existing green belt which must be preserved, although the land to the east is in the same ownership as Whitebrook Park. We are

concerned that the Hitachi building could become a candidate for further future development. Whilst it is good policy to see the redevelopment of offices within existing office parks such as this, there are occasions when overdevelopment becomes a problem.

BADNELL'S PIT

Since last reporting, the decision on Badnell's Pit/St. Mary's Park has been made following the appeal to the Building Inspectorate. At the end of January the proposal to build 448 homes on the former dump site off Blackamoor Lane was permitted. The view of the Society has been consistently that whilst the site needed to be dealt with, the proposed level of development was excessive. This was largely driven by the quoted cost of £28 million to clean up the contaminated site. However, 288 flats, 114 houses and 46 units of sheltered accommodation is gross over development, and will put a severe strain on all aspects of local infrastructure. Of course, the financial dynamics of the proposal have been radically changed by the current downturn in property demand and values. The RBWM has reluctantly accepted the outcome and decided against a high court/judicial appeal.

An indirect consequence of the over supply of flats in Maidenhead is illustrated by a recent Michael Shanly application at 22, Ray Mill Road East. This site adjoins Badnell's Pit, and was granted planning permission for a block of apartments in 2004. These have not been constructed and the new proposal is for 2 x 5 bedroom detached houses.

OLD CINEMA SITE

The Old Cinema site in Bridge Avenue now awaits redevelopment. In the meantime the Civic Society has contacted Berkshire Archaeology regarding the potential for excavation around the historic Chapel Arches. We have been assured that the planning permission includes a requirement for the developer to undertake a programme of archaeological works (Condition 15). A "written scheme of investigation" should be produced by the developer's archaeological consultants. This will be submitted to RBWM for formal approval following consultation with Berkshire Archaeology. We should be vigilant to ensure that this condition is implemented before construction commences.

TAPLOW MILL – A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

With an eye on planning permission later this month, landowners Watchword have lowered their sights and scaled back plans for the 45-acre paper mill site off Mill Lane, Taplow.

They've more than halved the number of dwellings, scrapped a contentious idea for a group of chalets on stilts at the water's edge and got rid of a tennis club. However, gone too is our idea for a footbridge.

Watchword have no intention of developing the site themselves. Once planning permission is achieved, they plan to sell off the land in parcels to developers and they claim they already have a major client interested in building a luxury hotel on the Skindles site. Their revised plans now envisage an even bigger, five star hotel with 150 bedrooms. They were also hopeful of being able to acquire land owned by the gas utilities to build into their future thinking.

The reduction in the number of dwellings from 400 to 180 comes mainly from changing five blocks of flats to townhouses. These would be built on the footprint of the mill sheds at the rear of the site but, at five storeys, could be one-and-a-half storeys higher than the existing buildings, which has already brought adverse comment. Other changes would see Dunloe Lodge and Mill House redeveloped as large single dwellings, rather than apartments and the listed Glen Island House, formerly St Regis's HQ, retained for office use.

At an exhibition of the revised plans last month, Watchword's agents Hunter Page seemed confident that the changes would win council approval. They said they'd liaised with the planners and listened to local residents.

South Bucks District Council has earmarked the land as a “strategic site” in its recently published draft Core Strategy. Like the Royal Borough, SBDC is embarking on its revised Local Development Framework process. Their emerging view is that appropriate uses for the site could include open space and recreational facilities, as well as employment, housing and an hotel.

This aligns well with the Society’s aims and those of our colleagues in the Hitcham and Taplow Society for revitalising the area as a shared public amenity. And, crucially, the council’s consultative document notes: “Redevelopment would provide a rare opportunity to improve public access to the Thames.”

Watchword have taken note to the extent that there are public footpaths through the site but a considerable amount of river frontage would be privately owned. Perhaps the biggest disappointment is that they felt the footbridge we had suggested across to Boulters was unviable. It is not currently in the proposals. In terms of regenerating the site and the area, we believe a bridge would be a major asset, linking the Thames Path and creating a mile-long circular walk between Maidenhead Bridge and Boulters round one of the most attractive suburban reaches on the Thames.

An application for outline planning permission was due to be submitted as we were going to press.

MAKE YOUR VIEWS COUNT

RBWM has embarked on its revised Core Strategy, the document at the heart of the Local Development Framework (LDF) which is the system of plans that will set out what we want to see in the Borough and how it will happen over the next 20 years.

The council is obliged throughout the process to consult residents. Hopefully you will have responded to the one on options for housing and employment development densities – the Green Belt questions – which closed recently on April 20.

Many of you will know that, despite its objections to the numbers, RBWM has been told by the government to build 6,920 dwellings between 2006 and 2026 and it’s thought that Maidenhead is earmarked to take 60% of the total. The good news is that they can already see their way to accommodating more than 5000 of those. But additional land needs to be found for the rest.

Because it was felt they had not done enough homework in this area last time round, and their Core Strategy was deemed unsound in part as a result, they’ve effectively been told to look upfront at the Green Belt. To soften the blow, which will surely come, they decided to dress this up by looking initially for opportunities to extend it.

In Maidenhead their own suggestions include Boulters Island, Bridge Gardens and Guards Club Park, which one might have thought were already protected, and another area in Cox Green includes about 100 yards of the A404(M)! Even so, the exercise provides an opportunity and anyone can make suggestions to the Green Belt Boundary Study which is ongoing.

Meanwhile the Borough has also been inviting comments on its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which lists sites for possible housing development. This was not a full-blown public consultation but comments were invited, again by April 20. It contained some options in the Green Belt including two with a potential for 2,500 homes on farms between Maidenhead and Cookham which had some people’s hair standing on end. It should be stressed, however, that the way the list is compiled, anyone from a major landowner to a private householder can suggest a site and the finished SHLAA simply lists them as sites with the possible *potential* for development.

Martin McNamee and Bob Dulson

SPRING & SUMMER EVENTS

The Spring programme of talks has been stimulating and informative. Tim Slaney, Head of Planning for RBWM opened the season. He informed us about the history of planning, raised issues such as housing provision - should it be high density in the town centre or stray into the green belt? Should planning appeals be dealt with by Central Government or by a nearby Local Authority who might have more local knowledge? He enlightened us as to the problems faced by planners such as, housing land availability, transport modelling, flood risk assessment and employment prospects in the town. He welcomed the involvement of the Civic Society, through the planning group and PRoM and he felt that working with local organisations was the way forward and that it would ensure the successful development of the town.

Gordon Anderson JP spoke very lucidly about the role of magistrates, explaining that they not only deal with criminal cases committed in their area but also a wide range of other issues including environmental and wildlife crime, fraud and copyright crime, anti-social behaviour, licensing matters, etc. He talked about the history of the magistracy, explained how the courts work and discussed some case studies; he set us thinking about sentencing in relation to these case studies and showed how structured the system is in relation to what is regarded as serious crime and the levels of punishment available to the magistrate.

Gordon dispelled a number of myths- one being that despite 60% of media reported crime being related to sex offences, in reality, crimes relating to sex are only 3% of all crime. This was just one of many things we learned about the subject. This was a very stimulating, interactive evening and the interest from the audience came through in the number of questions asked. Sadly, we very quickly ran out of time.

Our March talk was given by Tim De Meyer – LPA Commander for Maidenhead, who was the guest at our second Speaker's Luncheon, which was held at the WAMDSAD Clubhouse. As one would expect from such a young and successful “top cop” we enjoyed a riveting presentation from Tim. He destroyed our perceptions of the number of burglaries in a week, in this area, from suggestions of 10, 20, or 100? It is actually 2 or 3.

He talked about the advantages of having officers who are local, unlike in the Met. and how they are involved in chasing targets relentlessly, not in the sense of chasing figures but potential offenders. They do not just rely on visibility but employ “intelligence and harassment”, maintaining constant pressure on likely offenders. As a consequence, Windsor and Maidenhead are enjoying a big reduction in crime, thanks to this relentless approach.

Tim believes that most people join the Force for reasons of conscience and he is genuinely encouraged by the introduction of PSCO's and Neighbourhood Action Groups.

In keeping with Tim's role and the demands of his high pressure job, he was sadly unable to share lunch with us as he was involved in an inspection in the nearby town of Slough but Tim certainly left us with the feeling that policing in Maidenhead is in good hands.

Tina Sell

FORTHCOMING TALKS

SURPRISED BY LAUGHTER – THE LIGHTER SIDE OF AFRICA

Wednesday 20th May 2009

By Stephen Carr OBE.

We are most fortunate that on one of his rare visits to the UK, Stephen Carr has agreed to talk to us about his many and varied experiences of living and working in Africa.

The main focus of Stephen's work, as an agriculturalist, has been with small-scale farmers in Africa. This has been based on over 50 years of working with small-scale farmers in Africa and includes 40 years of living in rural African villages, senior posts in government service and with the Africa region of the World Bank. These have involved work in every country in Anglophone Africa including Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and others.



He went to Africa in 1952 to lecture on agriculture at Awka in Nigeria moving on to Sudan in 1954. There he lived the life of the local farmers introducing them to new food crops and including coffee.

In 1962 he moved on into Uganda where he worked with their Ministry of Agriculture, introducing smallholder tea growing, helping move hill people to better growing land and breeding and distributing disease resistant potatoes. After this he was back in southern Sudan and in Tanzania, in the first as Director of Agriculture and in the latter as Agricultural Advisor to the Prime Minister's Office.

In 1978 he moved to the World Bank which involved making a home first in Nairobi from where he covered the eastern side of Africa and then in Washington D.C. from where he worked across the whole continent. He was involved in all aspects of the work leading to putting of World Bank funds to work on agricultural projects but subsequently as Principal Agriculturalist in the Agricultural Technical Division of the World Bank he focussed more on broad technical and policy issues affecting small scale farmers in Africa.

Then in 1989 he nominally retired to Malawi where he has continued his agricultural mission on a voluntary basis from the home he built for himself in conformity with those of the surrounding people. On top of all this he has found time to write books, to be a governor of Wye College, a Visiting Fellow of London University, to be elected an Honorary Life Fellow of London University and to be awarded the Royal Africa Society's annual medal for outstanding services to Africa.

It is hoped to have signed copies of Stephen's book "Surprised by Laughter" available for purchase on the evening of the talk, priced at £16.

As always, we welcome all members and any guests who wish to attend. There will be a small charge of £3.00 to members and £4.00 to non – members to cover entrance and refreshments.

OUTINGS & EVENTS

The only visit that we have made this year was to Ascot Races to see behind the scenes and then watch the afternoon racing. Unfortunately, the visit we had planned to Greenwich in May, and the Reception and Social Evening scheduled for the 22nd of April have had to be cancelled due to lack of support.

BEHIND THE SCENES AT ASCOT



A chilly day, bright and blustery, did nothing to quell the enthusiasm of 50 or so members who enjoyed a day out at the world's most famous racecourse last month, organised by the Civic Society.

Guests were given a guided tour of the main facilities at the impressive grandstand building, including the weighing room and the lady jockeys' changing room, complete with en-suite sauna.

Society members survey the course before the races



Teething troubles tarnished the £220 million building when it opened in 2003. These affected shorter racegoers (including Her Majesty) but were quickly resolved and now everyone has, literally, a grandstand view of all the action. Set in what is said to be the largest area of woodland south of the Peak District, it certainly gives commanding views of the surrounding landscape, including Windsor Great Park.

Ascot Racecourse was founded by Queen Anne and in 2011, the Society's 50th year, will celebrate its tercentenary.

A black and white photograph of a horse race. In the foreground, the backs of several spectators are visible as they watch from behind a white railing. The race track is a dirt surface with white railings. Several horses and jockeys are in mid-stride. A large dark truck is parked on the right side of the track. On the left, a white sign with the text 'tinternet.com' is visible. The background shows a grassy field and a line of trees.

On July 11 we will be having a behind the scenes tour of **Lord's Cricket Ground** followed by a guided tour of **Kenwood House** in Hampstead.

A black and white photograph of a cricket match in progress. The field is visible with several players in white uniforms. The stands are filled with spectators. A large electronic scoreboard is visible in the background, displaying match statistics.

FLIGHT	132	JAMES	6
ST	40	* LC	
LAST IN	6	BOWLER	
LAST OUT	6	* LC	
5 RUNS	10	OVERS	
50	40	10	10
100	10	10	10
150	10	10	10
200	10	10	10
250	10	10	10
300	10	10	10
350	10	10	10
400	10	10	10
450	10	10	10
500	10	10	10
550	10	10	10
600	10	10	10
650	10	10	10
700	10	10	10
750	10	10	10
800	10	10	10
850	10	10	10
900	10	10	10
950	10	10	10
1000	10	10	10

Lord's today is not on its original site, being the third of three grounds that Lord established between 1787 and 1814. His first ground, now referred to as Lord's Old Ground, was where Dorset Square now stands. His second ground, Lord's Middle Ground, was used from 1811 to 1813 before being abandoned due to the construction through its outfield of the Regent's Canal. The present Lord's ground is about 250 yards north-west of the Middle Ground. Lord's is home to the oldest sporting museum in the world.



Kenwood House, Hampstead

Set in tranquil parkland with panoramic views over London, **Kenwood House** boasts sumptuous interiors and important paintings by many great artists. The house, remodelled in the 1760s by Robert Adam, was bought by brewing magnate, Edward Cecil Guinness, first Earl of Iveagh, in 1925. Thanks to him, we can admire masterpieces by Rembrandt, Turner, Reynolds, Gainsborough and Vermeer. Also on view is the Suffolk Collection, with its magnificent full-length Elizabethan portraits and stunning costume details. Outside, the parkland was influenced by the great English landscape gardener, Humphry Repton. We will have a guided tour of the house, and there may be time to also enjoy the lakeside walks and meandering woodland paths.

We do hope that this outing will attract a goodly number to attend.

Mike Copeland

PROJECTS

MILLENNIUM WALK

Missing Links - recent developments

Most significantly at the January meeting of the Local Access Forum (a Council committee dedicated to improving public access to the countryside) the completion of the Millennium Walk was added to the list of priority objectives. The current status of two of the missing links is as follows:

Prospect Hill to Temple Golf Club

Walkers currently take two routes from Hurley to access the superb footpath across Temple Golf Club. The first is walking along the narrow footway of the A4130, not only an unpleasant experience for walkers but, as cars & lorries tend to take avoiding action near to walkers, creating a traffic hazard for oncoming vehicles. The alternative route is to walk up to the top of Prospect Hill and then trespass through the roadside waste that includes old chalk pits, to reach the A4130. Neither of these alternatives is satisfactory.

Our link goes crosses College of Agriculture land reaching a point opposite Temple Golf Club. The main hold up in the creation of this link has been establishing how a safe crossing of the A4130 could be created. Such a plan has now been produced by Smallwoods, who do work for the Council, and is being considered by the Highways Department.



We want to be able to cross the road just south of this location near the entrance to the Golf Club

Lower Cookham Road to Maidenhead Riverside

Map showing EA flood bund land

This route has been walked for the last three years during the Boundary Walk organised by Maidenhead Rotary Club. We hope to obtain the central part of this path when the Environment Agency sell the remaining section of land that was acquired for flood bund construction. A condition of sale will reserve a 2m path along the northern boundary.

The remaining sections of the path require permission from Mr John Edwards of White Place Farm. We are hopeful that this will eventually be forthcoming.

THE GREEN WAY

“Windows” Project: Progress Report

As previously reported, the Society, in conjunction with East Berks Ramblers, put forward a proposal to the Green Way Working Group (GWWG) to create “windows” onto the stream north of Maidenhead so that walkers on the Green Way running from North Town Moor to the flood control gate can actually see water in the summer months rather than a stream congested with reeds and banks obscured by weeds.

Spraying by Forest & Garden Timber Services took place last year and initial indications are that the spraying has had an effect on the growth of most of the reeds, though the effect on *Phragmites* seems more limited. It has also controlled bankside weeds.



*Looking south from flood control gate. Left: May 2006; right: April 2009.
Note the reduced growth on the east bank (left had side of photos)*



*Maidenhead Ditch, looking north. Left: May 2006; right: April 2009.
Stream almost clear of reeds.*

As the spraying appears to be an effective method it was decided at the recent GWWG meeting to repeat the exercise again this year. In addition, as the Maidenhead Moor (Town Moor) Improvement Plan is now underway, it was decided to extend the spraying to control excess reed

growth in the stream on the Moor. The amenity societies and council officers on the GWWG will be visiting the Moor in May to select the areas of the stream to be treated. The Environment Agency has agreed to pay for the work to be done. We will so be discussing with Council officers other aspects of the Improvement Plan that we have particular concerns about: ensuring the footpaths are fit for purpose; and suggesting that planting over fifty willow slips between footpath and stream (planting that doesn't occur on the plan!) is a bad idea given the current maintenance regime.



Reeds in the stream on Maidenhead Moor, May 2006

In the past the stream on the Moor was regularly dredged by the Environment Agency and its predecessors and the spoil dumped just south of Ray Mill Road West. This has not been done for many years and the Council, as riparian owner, is currently unwilling to countenance further dredging. Spraying is a cheaper way of dealing with the reeds.

OCKWELLS PROJECT

Recently I gave a talk to the White Waltham Village Association that was essentially a virtual tour of Ockwells Manor house in Cox Green. I used the opportunity to stress the need to ensure that the open space field opposite Ockwells remains undeveloped so that the setting of Ockwells is preserved. This is not a remote concept. Some time ago, an historically unaware planner designated the field "white land" (i.e. suitable for development) and although the National Trust holds covenants on it, such things can be overturned. I'm told two attempts to do so have been made in the past and now we have a situation where, to satisfy the Local Development Plan Framework, the Council is looking for land on which to allow all these extra houses the government wants built. We think that sites such as this should be re-designated Green Belt land rather than sundry parks, cemeteries and roadside verges that seem to be earmarked for this purpose.

Professors Geoffrey Tyack and Malcolm Vale of Oxford University and local historian and author Christine Weightman, all of whom have visited Ockwells, have already written to the Council. We will also be contacting the National Trust to alert them to the situation. Please help us in our attempt to get the field re-designated as Green Belt by writing in our support to the Council at the following address: Philip Hylton, Planning Officer in Planning Policy, Planning and Development Unit, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead SL6 1RF. Or by e-mail to: philip.hylton@rbwm.gov.uk.

BYZANTIUM 330-1453

Exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts in Piccadilly



*Detail of Otho Grandison from the
Bern altar frontal*

At this exhibition, which is now closed, there was something of local interest: Item 256 “*Funerary Cloth with Otho de Grandon*” - a spectacular late 13th century cloth of embroidered red silk, measuring 3.3m by 0.9m, showing Otho Grandison kneeling before the Virgin and Child.

Whether it was a funerary cloth, or, as Otho’s biographer, Esther Rowland Clifford, claims, an altar frontal, its main interest to Maidenians is that he was the uncle of Katherine Grandison who, married to William Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, lived at Bisham Abbey in the 14th century. Katherine has been identified as the Countess of Salisbury who dropped her garter inspiring Edward III to found the Order of the Garter. It is thought that Otho donated the cloth to Lausanne Cathedral where he is buried. If you missed it, blame the *Advertiser* who had the opportunity to point out this connection and didn’t. If you want to see it now you will have to go to Switzerland! (We are grateful to the Bern Historisches Museum for permission to use these images of the altar frontal).

Members may recall the Society’s talk at Bisham Abbey, which was based on a study of its history; this has now evolved into a fuller study of the Grandison family and the buildings they put up in England, Wales, Ireland and Switzerland, and this will be published by the Society in due course.

Ann Darracott

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

Would you like to be actively involved in the Society?

Are you interested in photography?

Would you be prepared to help in the organisation of a photographic competition?

We are thinking of holding an ongoing photographic competition, which will reflect individuals’ “views” of Maidenhead – pictures of the parts we admire, hidden gems, architectural achievements, leisure opportunities, the beauties of nature, workers, even eyesores!

We are sure you can come up with many more captions reflecting the town in all its guises.

In order to develop this idea, we need a willing group to carry it forward so please don’t be afraid to get involved and get in touch with us.

YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

HERITAGE CENTRE NEWS

A £3000 grant from the Museum Development Fund has been received to employ a museum consultant to assist in the preparation of plans for collections management, documentation and emergencies, all of which are necessary elements of an application for "Accreditation", which will give us formal status as a Museum. It brings with it many new responsibilities but will also give access to additional funding, which in the present climate could be extremely helpful.

We are also about to appoint designers for the next stage of development, which will require an application to Heritage Lottery Fund to fund the installation of two permanent displays, the first an introduction to Maidenhead history for those from outside the area. Given that local history has everything from the Romans to racing cars, the designers are going to have to be very ingenious to cover 2,000 years of history in a small space. The other displays will be on the first floor in a gallery dedicated to the story of Air Transport Auxiliary, the civilian organisation which used men and women pilots of 28 nationalities to ferry warplanes around the country during World War II. ATA's HQ was at White Waltham, and its extraordinary story is our claim to wartime fame. The Heritage Centre's ATA collection is believed to be the second largest in the world, and we aim to become the foremost centre for ATA research.

Exhibitions

Memories of D-Day: 20 May -13 June 2009

We revive our 1994 exhibition to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the Normandy Landings on 6th June 1944.

Lost Buildings of Maidenhead: 18th June to 29th Aug 2009

Which fine old buildings do you remember? The old Library, the Guildhall and the old Police Station are among the featured buildings.

Buried Treasure: 8th Sept to 31st Oct

Discover local life from the Stone Age to medieval times, through archaeological finds made in the Maidenhead area – includes finds from Cox Green Roman Villa.

Events

RIVER THAMES HISTORICAL CRUISES

Thursday 3rd (SOLD OUT) and Tuesday 8th September, 10am-3pm.

Cruise the historic river from Maidenhead to beyond Marlow and back, with live commentary en route. Reservations now being accepted.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 11th to 13th

September venues to be announced

HISTORY QUIZ – Friday October 2nd at 8pm

A light-hearted quiz which will probably reveal how much we have all forgotten! With light refreshments. Start getting your team together now!

Talks

Lunchtime Talks – 30 minutes talks on a wide variety of local historical topics, at 12.45pm on the second Thursday of every month, i.e. 14 May, 11 June, 9 July, 13 Aug, 3 Sept, 8 Oct, 12 Nov, 10 Dec.

For further information and bookings, please contact the Heritage Centre:
Telephone 01628 780555 or e-mail: [**info@maidenheadheritage.org.uk**](mailto:info@maidenheadheritage.org.uk)

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 20th May 2009
Talk by Stephen Carr

“Surprised by Laughter – the Lighter Side of Africa”
Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Saturday 11th July 2009
Visit

Behind the Scenes at Lords Cricket Ground; and Kenwood House

September 2009
Event

Civic Society Luncheon – to be confirmed

Wednesday 21st October 2009
Talk by Peter Evans

“Olympics 2012 and the Effect on Maidenhead”
Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 8.00 pm

Wednesday 18th November 2009
Talk by Dr Jonathon Jones, followed by **AGM**

“The Local NHS Hospital Trust, From a Medics Point of View”
Methodist Church Hall, King Street, 7.45 pm

CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

President of the Trustees	John McIntosh, 26 Harvest Hill Road, SL6 2QQ	633259
Hon. Secretary	June Jorge, 134 Beverley Gardens, SL6 6ST	626616
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 2009

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

13th January, 10th February, 10th March, 12th May, 9th June, 14th July, 8th September, 10th November, 8th December

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS FOR 2009

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

14th April, 13th October

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 18th November 2009 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 10th July 2009.**

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