

Portchester Civic Society

Spring 2011 News Update

Civic Voice

The Civic Voice Spring Network South event was held at Reading Town Hall on Saturday 26th March with Hazel and Paul Woodman and myself attending to represent the Portchester Civic Society. The meeting started with a welcome from the Chairman, John Walker, who was followed by Tony Burton speaking about developing our common voice.

Civic Voice President, Griff Rhys Jones gave us his view on the Civic Voice and what it all means, along with interesting anecdotal comments from other talks which were very interesting. Tony Burton then talked about developing our common voice and what concerns we all have as societies and gave results of the survey recently sent around to all members.

We then listened to a recording of an interview, the Decentralisation Minister, Greg Clark MP, had with Tony Burton. This generated even more questions that are to be passed to Mr. Clark to get his views on the new Localism bill and neighborhood planning. Common questions raised by the members included a more definite definition of "neighborhood" and would non-constitutional societies be able to force a referendum?

Following a networking lunch, the meeting split into separate groups run by civic society members to discuss issues that are close to their hearts. These included Oxford Civic Society's, Oxclean, and sessions on listed buildings and 'How healthy is your town?' The Oxclean session I attended for about litter picking was a useful thought provoker for when we organise the Beachwatch cleaning event along the foreshore. Ideas included e-mailing local schools and societies in the area to get more people involved and the opportunity to include the various open spaces we have in Portchester as well.

To close we had a talk about Civic Day on June 25th this year, what it means and what some societies are going to be doing. All in all this was a very good event where some useful points were raised and lots of food for thought!

John Morgan

Castle Primary School Open Sensory Garden - 7th April 2011

The invitation to 'take a dip in the pond' was nearly taken literally when Castle Primary School at Portchester declared their new Sensory Garden officially open, on one of the hottest days of the year so far.

The Deputy Mayor of Fareham, Councillor Trevor Cartwright and Deputy Mayoress, Mrs Ruth Cartwright joined pupils, teachers and Head Teacher, Justin Bartlett to cut the ribbon across the pond before taking part in a 'pond dipping' session with the pupils.

The 'Friends of Castle School' (FOCS) raised over £10,000 to enable the overgrown quadrangle to be laid out with a new pond, bridge and raised planting areas, which all members of the school will be able to use for lessons and as a quiet recreation area. Hazel Woodman presented a cheque for £50 to the School to purchase more plants on behalf of the Portchester Civic Society. This money came from our successful lunch and auction in March.

The event was a double celebration for, as well as unveiling a plaque to celebrate the opening of the garden, a further plaque was revealed to celebrate the work that the Chair of FOCS, Sally Rogers, has put into leading the fundraising efforts. Sally is stepping down as Chairperson after over 20 years of dedicated service to the school.

'Portchester Past' Exhibition

Our annual **Portchester Past Exhibition** of photographs is taking place in the Foyer of the Library/Health Centre in West Street, Portchester from Saturday 28th May to Saturday 4th June during Library open hours. We have amassed a wealth of images of Portchester over the years and always welcome new ones to scan and add to the collection if you have anything tucked away at home.

White Hart Pub to become a Co-op Store

The White Hart Public House on the corner of Castle Street and White Hart Lane appears to have been struggling to continue as a pub for a few years now, with frequent changes of management. The inevitable seems to have happened with Southern Co-operatives Ltd application for an alcohol license from 8am to 11pm being approved with plans to change the pub into a convenience store. This is the first pub in Fareham to go this way but we have seen others in Portsmouth and Gosport that have already been converted. As long as the exterior is not altered, in planning terms, a change of use is not required as these premises already sell alcohol and food.

Our Society believes that this change will happen but wrote to Fareham Borough Council to express our concerns. We believe that there is a major problem with public safety, as this store will create increased traffic movements on this dangerous junction. At present only one of the three entrances to the car park is open but with many more short stay visits by cars and delivery lorries, we are sure they will have to open at least one more entrance to provide traffic flow. This opening will be right on the junction! Since the priority was changed in Castle Street, traffic now does not have to stop or slow down when turning into or out of White Hart Lane and Castle Street. This has made it very difficult for pedestrians to cross near this junction that has two bus stops close by. The Co-op at the Wicor end of White Hart Lane has suffered continual problems with people pulling up on double yellow lines on its junction to nip into the shop. Anti Social Behaviour has also been a continuing problem there and we can foresee the same happening at the White Hart. Under the Licensing Act there is a section on safety and public nuisance so we requested Fareham Borough Council carry out a full assessment of the problems before allowing this store to open.

The beer garden of the pub is being sold off separately and will probably have two or three houses built on it. The White Hart and its garden is in the Conservation zone so we are keeping a close eye on this site and will be pressing for the best design on this prestigious site.

Sunday Lunch raises funds

We held a very successful Sunday Lunch and Auction for members and guests in the Parish Hall on the 6th March, raising enough money to complete the funds needed to purchase a new projector for our talks and make a donation to Castle Primary School to buy plants for their new Sensory Garden.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2011

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| Tue 19 Apr | Women and the Royal Navy
by Ms Victoria Ingles, National Museum of the Royal Navy |
| Tue 17 May | My Life in the 17th Century
by Mrs Y Hoskins, Little Woodham Re-enactment Village, Gosport |
| Sat 21 May | Portchester Community Day - The Precinct |
| Sat 28 May
to Sat 4 Jun | Photo Exhibition in Library/Health Centre Foyer
(during Library open times) |
| Sat 18 Jun | Portchester Gala |
| Tue 21 Jun | The Management of Urban Trees, A Tree Officer's Perspective
by Paul Johnston, FBC |
| Jul & Aug | No Meetings |
| Tue 20 Sep | The Defence of the Realm in Southern Hampshire
by Bryan Jerrard |
| Tue 18 Oct | Smugglers in and around Chichester and Langstone Harbours
by Ms Linda Newell |
| Sat 12 Nov | 'Memories of Portchester' Exhibition in Parish Hall |
| Tue 15 Nov | AGM & 'They kept the home fires burning' - The Story of Portsmouth and Gosport Women in WW1 by Ms Jenny Bartlett |
| Tue 13 Dec | Local Garden Delights by Hazel & Paul Woodman |