



NEWSLETTER NO 82 SPRING 2018

Weymouth Civic Society works to conserve the historic towns and harbours of Weymouth and Portland and to enhance their built environment.

Dear Members and Friends

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2018 which as a year does not seem very new now. I hope the holiday period was a good one and you are refreshed, looking forward to what this year holds.

One of the first pieces of news we received was that all bookings are being cancelled at St Nicholas Church from March so we have to find an alternative venue fairly quickly. We will move in March and inform you of the details once it has all been booked. We are sorry about this change as St Nicholas has proved a suitable venue. Hopefully the new one will be as good. (STOP PRESS: See Calendar p12)

The Planning and Environment group have been kept busy with an increase in people coming to us to discuss various projects and ideas. As ideas for a history group develop, we shall be inviting your participation, and also with our Civic Day plans. Last year our focus on the Parks and Gardens was well received. This year we are looking to take an interest in Weymouth Town Centre which, as a conservation area, is badly in need of attention. We have a possible idea to use the historic plaques placed on buildings around the town, most with the involvement of the Civic Society, as a focus. More news soon.

The evening of the presentation of last year's awards was an extremely enjoyable time with the actual plaque arriving in time for it to be presented on the evening to Derek Luckhurst for the building at Crabbers' Wharf, Castletown, Portland. (See further pages.)

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting the Tudor House for their Georgian

Christmas. If you did not get there, you missed a treat and an opportunity to enhance your knowledge. I know the present band of volunteers are very enthusiastic and enter into dressing up and making props with gusto.

The Nothe Fort has welcomed Louise Baker as General Manager and she has been well received. There is no doubting her energy and expertise, so long may she stay with us. There is an article about her later in this newsletter so I will say no more now. By the time you read this, the Fort committee will have held a volunteer recruitment day with many present volunteers on hand to show visitors the opportunities available. In addition, the Fort may not be open to the public but the walls often ring to the sound of children's voices as they visit all through the year to take part in the Evacuee Experience. Last term the team were fully booked with some schools having to defer their visit or be disappointed completely.

We look forward to your participation and support in the meetings and projects planned for this year.

Mary Bennett – Chairman

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Nomination Papers

for the elections at the AGM have been sent out by email and post. If you have not received them please contact the Secretary.

Completed paper forms are due to be with the Secretary by 5.00 pm on **16 February**

Gerald Mabb Secretary, 21 Ambleside DT3

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

THE COUNCIL OFFICES.

We read that the Council has lost out on one aspect of the rather complicated situation regarding the former Council Offices on North Quay. The development company Acorn had wanted to buy the site and convert the building to 56 flats – what appeared to us a very dense development - without needing to apply for planning permission, based on the government allowing change of use from ‘office’ use class to residential. Our Society objected, and following legal advice, the Council determined that the Council Offices were an individual ‘sui generis’ use, not within the ‘office’ use class, so that planning permission would be required for the proposed development.

Now the developers have won an appeal against that decision. The Inspector decided that the building does fall into the category of office use, and therefore an application for planning permission would not be required for the conversion to residential use. Costs were not awarded against the Council as the Inspector concluded that they had not acted unreasonably.

All this rather appears to be past history, since the Council stopped the sale of the property to that company. Thus, although there is still a separate legal hurdle ahead, the Council can now proceed to make its own plans for appropriate development of this important site.

FORMER UNDERHILL JUNIOR SCHOOL, PORTLAND.

The application for housing development on this site overlooking Chesil Cove was approved by the Council in November despite misgivings and massive opposition, including from our Society. This was to be subject to a requirement for an affordable housing contribution by the developers. But, as is so often the case, the applicants came back seeking some improvement to their own situation very soon after – in this case to drop the affordable housing contribution. This was referred to the District Valuer, who determined that the scheme was not sufficiently viable to provide the contribution. So, with evidently great reluctance on the part of some Members, the Council’s Planning Committee at their January meeting felt obliged to agree to the removal of the affordable housing requirement.

Too often developers wriggle out of these obligations. Portland like so many other areas is desperate for affordable housing for its own people.

***Pru Bollam** – Chairman of the Planning and Environment Committee*

ANNUAL AWARDS 2017

(Learn more about awards on our website "[Awards](#)" pages)

THE ANNUAL AWARD – CRABBERS’ WHARF DEVELOPMENT, CASTLETOWN, PORTLAND

Work involved the demolition of vacant and decaying industrial buildings, formerly used for crab and lobster processing, situated on Castletown Pier, and their replacement by a building designed to suggest the form of a ship. The ground floor is divided into small marine business units, with nine holiday apartments above, named Caissons View after the two Second World War ‘mulberry harbour’ Phoenix Caissons in the harbour nearby.

This ingenious and pleasing building fits in well with the local maritime environment. As part of a major project to regenerate this part of Castletown, it has made a valuable contribution to reviving the area, which suffered badly following the closure of the naval base. It has opened up a view of the caissons, which will greatly add to the historic interest in them.

**Awarded to: Derek Luckhurst, Nemesis Properties Ltd.
Design of the Crabbers’ Wharf building by: P. Dean Associates.**



THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON MONUMENT, BINCLEAVES GREEN

A SPECIAL AWARD is made for this monument, created in recognition of the major part played by Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, owner of Belfield House and MP for Weymouth, in bringing about the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833, as well as other social reforms.

Awarded to: The Thomas Fowell Buxton Society.

THE PRACTICAL ARTISTRY AWARD

Of neo-classical design appropriate to the era in which Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was active, and finely carved with detailed images of significance to his life and work in the abolition of slavery, it enhances the open space of Bingleaves Green, providing a focal point for views in various directions.



Awarded to Weymouth College Stonemasonry Department at the Dorset Skills Centre.

Designed by Peter Loizu, lecturer and former student at Weymouth College.

Carved by Students of Weymouth College

Update

We were very sad to hear of the damage to the stone decorative surround to this splendid monument only a few days after the award. The Society has donated £100 towards the repairs.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

LANSDOWNE VILLA, LANSDOWNE SQUARE, RODWELL

The Certificate is awarded for the sensitive restoration of Lansdowne Villa, facilitated by the development of four new houses in its grounds. The Villa, an important Victorian building in the Lansdowne Square Conservation Area, had been lying empty and was beginning to deteriorate. It is now a fine residence suitable for modern living, while retaining its integrity. Its setting is respected by the quality of the landscaping and surface treatment of the whole site, together with the design and materials of the four new houses, all in harmony with the main Villa.

Awarded to: Lighthouse Land and Developments.
Architectural Design by: Austin Design Partnership.
Project carried forward by: Celebration Developments Ltd.
Detailed design & landscaping by: Partridge Associates Landscaping and LMA Architects.

Lansdown Villa



Monterey

COMMENDATIONS

MONTEREY, 70 BUXTON ROAD

This elegant new villa on the north side of Buxton Road has been built to replace a former bungalow of the 1930s. It is a well- proportioned building of modern design and good quality, flat-roofed and rendered in a light colour. The generous size of the plot allows for landscaping of the deep frontage in keeping with the over-all design.

Awarded to: Owner and designer of the building - Michael Kemp.

LORTON PARK -BROADWEY - PHASE 1

These new houses form the first phase of a much larger scheme at Lorton Park, Broadway. Their light coloured render and slate roofs create a pleasant group in this rural location. Care has been taken to retain existing trees, and to keep the spacious setting around the Old Rectory.

Awarded to: Koori Limited

Architects: Tetlow King

LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

38-40 THE ESPLANADE (AUGUSTA PLACE)

Especially welcome is the reinstatement of domestic frontages to the Esplanade, restoring the Georgian and Victorian character of the buildings, by replacing unsuitable modern restaurant- and shop-fronts. New bow windows on the ground floors of the two listed Georgian properties match the originals above. The Victorian building at No. 38 has new windows and door in keeping with its character, while new railings have added to the domestic appearance of the buildings.

To: Kings Weymouth Ltd.

Architect: Nicholas Brown (RIBA) Ltd.

24 TRINITY ROAD - THE OLD HARBOUR HOUSE

THE BRIDGE FAIR TRADE SHOP

This Grade II listed Georgian property situated next to Chapelhay Steps has been carefully refurbished and brought into new use with an attractive shop on the ground floor. The building now makes a significant contribution to the character of the south harbourside area, and it is hoped this will encourage further improvement to the area.

To: Graham and Linda Perry, on behalf of the Fairbridge Trust.

TUDOR HOUSE

As we are well into the New Year now it seems strange to talk about Christmas, but I have to say how pleased we were with our “Georgian Christmas at Tudor House” event, when 180 visitors came to see us and we raised just short of £200 in donations and a great deal of goodwill.

Lots of people who wouldn't perhaps normally visit Tudor House declared they would be coming back for the “full tour” when we open for the Season (1st May) which is one of the primary functions of our special events.

Our “new” Volunteers rose to the occasion and participated fully, dressed in costume they welcomed people and talked about Georgian Christmas Traditions. – Next Year – Victorian !!

Once again we were very happy to take part in the Christmas Tree Festival at Hope Church in Trinity Street, and to attend the Church Service on 21st where we were kindly presented with a cheque for £25.





Crabchurch Conspiracy re -enactment is our next event and should be even better this year with some parts taking place around the square and the main conspirators meeting to “plot” in Tudor House -3 March. For full details of all the events over that weekend there is a Crabchurch Facebook page.

A happy, peaceful and prosperous 2018 from everyone at Tudor House.

Dorothy Hyman – Custodian

OBITUARY TO JOHN CHANTREY

John had a massive influence in the earliest days of Nothe Forts existence as a museum. He was one of the initial heroic team of volunteers who took on the responsibility of changing a decrepit and much damaged building into something worthy of being called a museum. John's enthusiasm came no doubt from the fact that he had direct experience of serving in the Nothe and Breakwater forts. As a local Territorial soldier serving in the Royal Engineers he was directed to report to the Nothe Fort on 23rd August 1939 where he might have expected to remain "for the duration". However, he was sent overseas, becoming a POW but returning to Weymouth after the war was over.

In the late 1970s when the Fort had become the property of the Council, members of Weymouth Civic Society worked one summer with Council help to clean up and bring some order to the chaos that it had become. John then went to the council to gain permission for the Civic Society to continue the work. Although the Council offered all sorts of equipment – paint brushes, spades, wheelbarrows, etc. – they were quite emphatic that there was no money available.

Undeterred, John gathered up volunteers to take on the mammoth task. When a telephone call was received from the BBC, asking to use Nothe Fort for filming part of *Beau Geste* and offering £800, their prayers seemed to be answered.

John

Joan



NOTHE FORT WELCOMES NEW MANAGER



Louise Baker joined Nothe Fort staff at the beginning of October as General Manager, bringing years of experience working in different capacities. Her last job was Curator at Madame Tussauds in London. Previous to that she worked as Visitor services Officer at the Museum of London and Project Manager on the Cutty Sark at Greenwich. Nearly fifty of the Fort's volunteers welcomed Louise Baker at their End of Season Lunch held in the Fort View Café, all of us wanting to meet the new "boss".

After only four months Louise is already making her mark. Never afraid to roll up her sleeves and work alongside staff and volunteers, she has greatly boosted morale. Plans for the future of Nothe Fort are rolling in so fast that us "oldies" are finding it hard to keep up – her energy and enthusiasm seem to be endless.

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Civic Society members were joined by a team from Manpower Services, headed by Alasdair Murray, and restoration work began as did the making of displays. From his wartime experience John was an expert on searchlights and masterminded the new searchlight emplacement on the terrace. After four years Manpower Services came to an end, and responsibility for Fort maintenance reverted to the Civic Society so a proper committee was set up with Jack Rumble as Chairman, Alasdair as Curator and John as leader of the Electrical Team.

John continued as a volunteer at Nothe Fort until the bid for the HLF project was accepted, but with his wife Joan he still attended Civic Society members' meetings for many years and was always pleased to be asked about "the early days of the Fort".

Sadly John passed away on 2nd November 2017 but he will not be forgotten. He features on a short video at Nothe Fort and his name is on one of the soldiers' beds in the Victorian Gun Deck.

WEYMOUTH CIVIC SOCIETY

Programme of meetings and Visits 2018

February 19 **Fifty Years of Conservation Areas**
St Nicholas Colin Ellis – Former Conservation Officer, W&PBC
Buxton Rd

March 19 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**
Old Town Hall
NEW VENUE*** **Members only**

The above meetings start at 7.30

**After February St Nicholas Church Hall will no longer be available.
We have secured the Old Town Hall, High West St as our future venue.**

Committee Meetings

Board Meetings
Fridays at the Fort 10.30am

March 2
April 6
May 4
June 1

Planning and Environment
Fridays at 71 Roman Road 4.00pm

March 9
April 13
May 11
June 8

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