



Maidenhead Civic Society NEWS

Issue 4/03

October 2003



*Maidenhead High Street
27th September, 2001
Thursday around 3pm*

What do you want for Maidenhead? Send in your questionnaire (photo: Gerald Ashton)

In this issue

A Strategic Plan for Maidenhead – John McIntosh, V. President

AGM Agenda and Annual Reports

Regular features on talks, outings, the Heritage Centre,
Projects and Planning

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THE FUTURE OF MAIDENHEAD

A STRATEGIC REVIEW

Maidenhead has a long and successful past and is currently a success at least in terms of its economy. Because of its success it has undergone a continuous series of re-buildings, redevelopments and expansions through the centuries leaving little that reflects its history. Beautiful old towns with their thatched cottages and medieval architecture reflect relative failure! Moreover, Maidenhead grew up round an odd centre, crammed in along a parish boundary on one side and constrained by the flood plain on the other. On top of all that, as the pace of development has rushed on particularly in the past 50 years, its amenity has followed along behind, at best piecemeal and unplanned, at worst non-existent and chaotic. The Civic Society was formed in 1961 in an effort to promote a much better civic amenity by a process of actions, persuasion and downright arm-twisting. The early enthusiasm of the hard core of members who started the Society has now rather faded into a sedate middle age while the need for improvements in amenity have if anything increased. Recently, our sister society - the Windsor and Eton Society - showed a way ahead by drawing up a document entitled 'The Future of Windsor and Eton' setting out in considerable detail what they saw as objectives for amenity improvement in their part of the Borough. The two towns have some common amenity needs but in general, unsurprisingly, they differ substantially.

The Executive of the Society decided that the production of a corresponding document focussing on Maidenhead's amenity objectives was highly desirable and a first version of this has been created by a 'brainstorming' exercise of a group of members of the Executive and with further separate input from the Planning Group. After additions by other Executive members this whole has been consolidated into a document 'Strategic Review of Amenity in Maidenhead' of which you will find a copy with this Newsletter. At first sight it looks rather daunting, but it is actually a set of self-contained statements of the objectives for improving Maidenhead that the Society might like to see implemented. A first version of this document has gone to the Council with a view to having the Society's thinking considered in the current formulation of the new Local Plan. The Executive wishes to take the content of the Review through two further stages. The first is to look at the proposals in detail to see what has been omitted. Secondly, and most importantly, the Executive seeks input and views from you the members as to what you think should be included and what views you may have on what is envisaged so far. To that end a blank questionnaire is included with this Newsletter and the Review, using the same headings as are used in the Review. What we ask is that you write under the various headings what it is that you would wish to see as improvements in amenity in the town. When all the material from these two steps is to hand the Executive will produce a final Strategic Review. This will act as a guide to the Society's activities and particularly in our efforts to persuade the Council to develop amenity in the direction the Society sees as desirable. It will also focus the Society's work in a more positive and active direction. It is envisaged that at each Annual General Meeting a report will be made of progress against the Review's objectives.

Finally, to complete this explanation of what the Society is about, it seems sensible to include a definition of what is meant by 'amenity'. The dictionary defines it as 'the quality of being pleasant or agreeable'. For the Society's purposes it is taken to mean 'the presence of features or facilities which enhance the quality of life and the environment'.

So, now let us hear what you, our members, want to see in the town. This is a crucial and important juncture in the Society's development and we need your comments if we are to carry weight.

John McIntosh

TALKS

October 2003

Regrettably, there will be no talk in October. No one has yet answered our call in the last Newsletter to help organise the Society's talks programme. We live in hope that somebody will, so that we can resume in the New Year.

WEDNESDAY 19th November 2003 – 8 p.m.

“OCKWELLS MANOR IN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES”

An illustrated talk by Ann Darracott

Ockwells was purchased by William Day, Provost of Eton College, in the 16th century. The talk will cover the period of ownership by the Days and their descendants during which Ockwells became “ruinous”. It will draw on information in the documents recently purchased by Berkshire Record Office

YORK STREAM - AN OLD PROBLEM

York Stream has obviously been an eyesore many times over many years. Pat Symons passed on the following gem from the archives of the Borough church; it is a transcript of a vestry record of St Mary's Chapel, Maidenhead, for September 27th 1838:

“At a Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Parishes of Cookham and Bray within the Borough of Maidenhead in Vestry assembled pursuant to Notice for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of adopting means to remove the nuisances arising from the collection of Mud and Filth at the Chapel and Moor Arches within the said Borough.

The Rev. G. C. Gorham in the Chair.

It was resolved on the motion of Mr James Lovegrove, seconded by Mr King, that the Surveyors of the Parishes of Bray and Cookham within the District of the Corporation of Maidenhead be urged jointly to abate the Nuisance now existing in the Water courses under the Chapel and Moor Arches and that the expense attending the same be equally divided between the Surveyors of the two Parishes.

*G. C. Gorham
Chairman”*

At least they made a decision!
(More on York Stream on pages 16 & 17)

OUTINGS

On the 6th July we visited Highclere Castle and Broadlands. The Castle had been the location for a wedding the previous day and the driveway was still illuminated by flares. We had a very interesting guided tour and heard about the Castle's history and its modern day role as a popular site for filming historical drama. We then travelled south to Broadlands the home of the Mountbatten family. It is set on the banks of the River Test in a glorious position. After our guided tour of the house we visited the small museum in the mews and watched a very good history of Lord Mountbatten in the small cinema.

Our next visit was to Buckingham Palace, which was celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Coronation. We had obtained a special group pass, which enabled us to visit the State Rooms on a timed ticket and then to stroll through the gardens. The Palace looked beautiful with the sun streaming through the open windows onto the chandeliers and ornate decorations. We then visited the Royal Mews to see the Coronation Coach and other Royal transport. Finally we went to The Queens Gallery to see the special exhibition of Leonardo de Vinci and the wonderful treasures from the Royal Households around the country.

Our next visit is on December 14th to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Here we will see the Mary Rose, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior, the Royal Navy Museum and the Dockyard Apprentice. We can also experience life aboard a Type 23 frigate and a Sea Harrier and Lynx helicopter simulator. There will also be an opportunity to tour the modern fleet by launch.

In 2004 we are planning another exciting round of visits, which will probably include Woburn Abbey, a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament and the Cabinet War Rooms. If any of the Civic Society members visits a place of interest, which would be suitable for a group visit, then please let me know.



An early print of the Mary Rose

Mike Copeland

MINUTES OF THE 42ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY

Held on Wednesday, 20th November 2002

In the absence of the President, Mr Richard Poad, the chair was taken by Mr Harold James, Vice President.

Approximately 40 people were present. Apologies for absence were received from Penny and Clifford Baker and Miss Rosa Lee.

1. Harold James opened the meeting by welcoming the Mayor, Cllr. Leo Walters, the Society's Patron. He went on to say that the situation is very much the same as before. There has been success with the website and hopes for the Millennium Walk but pointed out that there was still concern over the lack of water in the York Stream. It was also pointed out the need to recruit willing workers in the Society and appealed to anyone in the audience to come forward to help. He then talked about the successful visit by members of our sister society in Bad Godesberg.

2. The Minutes of the last meeting held on 21st November 2001 were proposed by Michael Johnson and seconded by Margaret Bowdery.

3. **Accounts**

During the last two years a concerted effort has been made to improve the financial position of the Society such that a foundation is made to allow further projects to be undertaken. The last financial year has seen this process move on significantly. The Annual Accounts have been circulated and the following points are highlighted:

- The bequest from Ted Sammes has in recent years distorted the apparent financial position of the Society. The bequest was left to the Society for specific purposes related to establishment of a Heritage Centre for Maidenhead. During the last financial year, a final sum of £233 was received from the bequest. The total bequest, £83,282 including interest accrued, has been transferred to the Maidenhead Heritage Trust for their use in accordance with the specific wishes of Ted Sammes. This transfer explains the significant change in the 'Balance of Funds' at the bottom of the page.
- Subscriptions have increased mainly due to the higher subscription rates but also an increase in single payments by new Life members. As a result of this factor the overall level of subscription income will reduce in the current financial year. A review of payments is being undertaken to ensure that the new membership rates are being paid by all members.
- Steady profits have been made on most outings due to the high take-up of coach seats.
- The tax refunds noted relate to the last two years under the old Deed of Covenant scheme and a claim is being prepared under the new Gift Aid scheme which could potentially increase our income by over £500 p.a. A letter has been written to the members who have not responded to the Gift Aid claim and a response would allow us to make a comprehensive claim. Thanks to the efforts of Ann Darracott, we received a Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) donation of £500 from Shell. This is for specific use related to the Ockwells project.
- During the last financial year we, along with most other civic societies, had problems in obtaining insurance cover at anything like an affordable rate. The low premium payment quoted in the accounts is there because we were only covered for part of the year. The Civic Trust has now stepped in to offer a blanket policy scheme to members and we have now joined this scheme.
- Just after closing the accounts for the last financial year, most of the money held at

Lloyds Bank was transferred to our high interest, tax-free deposit fund with COIF. These funds are secure and not reliant on stock market performance.

- Income from raffles at Talks, whilst not specifically highlighted, has helped to offset some of the speakers' costs.

It is recommended that the new Executive Committee consider using some of our accumulated funds on projects such that the profile of the Society is increased locally. It was also recommended that a concerted campaign should be made to increase the number of corporate members.

The accounts were proposed by Gillian Moore and seconded by Michael Johnson.

4. Reports

The Vice President invited the officers to make any further comments. Full reports from each of the officers were given in the October 2002 issue of the Newsletter

5. Election of Officers

Richard Poad was proposed as President by Gillian Moore and seconded by Brian Madge. The Mayor was proposed as Patron by Gillian Moore and seconded by Michael Bailey. Harold James was proposed as Vice President by Michael Bailey and seconded by Ann Darracott. Michael Bailey was proposed as Vice President by Trevor Farnfield and seconded by Daphne Line.

The rest of the officers were then elected as follows:

Vice Chairman	Angela Howorth
Hon. Secretary	June Churchman
Asst. Secretary	Gillian Moore
Hon. Treasurer	Trevor Farnfield
Hon Membership Secretary	Shashi Dare
Chairman, Planning Group	Michael Johnson
Trustees	Ann Child, Harold James, Richard Poad

They were proposed by Daphne Line and seconded by Ann Darracott

Daphne Line offered herself for re-election and this was proposed by Ann Darracott and seconded by Mike Copeland.

A presentation was made to John McIntosh who retired as Chairman and a unanimous vote of thanks was given for all his work on the Committee. He was proposed as a Vice President by Gillian Moore and Ann Darracott, and seconded by Bob Sandys and Daphne Line. A presentation was also made to Angela Howorth for all the hard work she had put into organising the Talks.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2003

I did not expect to find myself writing this report this year. However, our efforts during the year to find someone to take on the job of Chairman of the Society have so far been unsuccessful. In this situation the Executive meetings throughout the year have been chaired by **Angela Howorth** who is currently vice-chairman but who has announced her decision to stand down from that post at the AGM. Our many thanks to her for the effort she has put in, not only in chairing the meetings but also on other aspects of the Society's activities. It is pleasing that she intends to continue on the Executive Committee.

The inability of the Society so far to find someone willing to take on the post of Chairman is a serious matter. The Society plays an important part in working for those improvements in amenity in the town which help to make it a better place to live in. Without someone to lead the Society and to represent it, its effectiveness is severely blunted. As I have said elsewhere societies such as ours play an integral role in helping bring into view those issues in the community which need attention such as, in our case, helping to shape the town's developments. These can never be fully covered by official bodies such as the Council and their officers. We are not a 'bolt-on-goodie' but are an essential part of the system. But without someone willing to be Chairman it is going to be harder and harder to keep the Society focussed and effective. In a similar vein we urgently need someone, or preferably a small group of two or three to take on the job of arranging the Talks. During the year a number were arranged on an ad hoc basis by **Mike Copeland** and myself but it needs more consistent planning than either of us has the time to bring to it.

The scrutiny of planning applications on an ongoing basis is the major feature of the Society's activity. The Planning Report gives a round-up of the wide variety of developments scanned. It is worth noting that a review of the final outcome of those planning applications on which we comment shows that our views do carry weight. With the change of political control the proposals for the redevelopment of the Town Hall have gone into abeyance and if new or revamped facilities are needed then it is hoped that they will be more sensitive to the area in and around Library Square.

A feature of recent planning applications has been the increasing number of applications involving in-filling. This is leading potentially to the piecemeal downgrading of the local environment with the haphazard loss of green space. It is particularly of concern where there is a neighbourhood of properties with big gardens. The pattern tends to involve the demolition of the existing house with redevelopment in the form of blocks of flats, houses etc all to a much higher density than before. There is then the obvious risk that further properties will be targeted and there will follow a progressive change over a large area to a high housing density and all without any overall plan. Equally there have been developments in such areas where developers have succeeded in amalgamating portions of neighbouring gardens and then building a new estate of houses. All such developments can also give rise to major increases in road traffic. But in any area whatever the density of housing this trend needs careful and effective control.

There is, of course, intense pressure for new housing in the town but in the end urgent consideration needs to be given to ensuring that the town as a whole and residential areas in particular retain qualities of appearance and amenity that make them pleasant and acceptable places in which to live. Attention has to be given to ensuring shopping facilities with enough capacity to service an increased population in a town which is not too well supplied in this respect. Schools, medical services, water and sewage supplies also need to match the increased demand. It has yet to be seen what proposals the Council will bring forward in the new Local Plan but the Society intends making it a top priority to see that these new trends in development come under overall plans.

The website, redesigned last year, has not yet given the Society the new set of eyes and ears nor raised its profile as was intended. Since more and more people, not least of the older age brackets are learning how to operate on the web and e-mail it makes sense to use this powerful facility to make us more effective. The problem seems to be that we are not nearly good enough yet at keeping those pages with variable information up to date and interesting. The quarterly Newsletter is the main channel for communicating to our members but the aim is to make the website a first choice for anyone seeking immediate information/news on issues appropriate to the Society's activities and indeed to provide a ready channel for the input of members ideas, comments etc. During the coming year we intend to do better, so do check out the site.

How do we persuade members and indeed those who are not yet members to involve themselves in the work of the Society? This is a question which is worrying many voluntary societies today and not least ours. The Executive Committee is much in need of new blood and what with older

members dropping out and a dearth of new entrants too much of the effort is falling on too few shoulders. Also new initiatives are proving ever more difficult to undertake. We could do with a minimum of six new Committee members. I have explained above that voluntary societies are integral to the system whereby society operates. So how do we get people to join in? There is nothing difficult about doing so. Don't be put off by the grand title of 'Executive Committee.' Apart from the necessary functions (Secretary, Treasurer etc.) it is a group of people who get together to cooperate and press on with whatever their particular line of interest is or to help achieve a common objective, all under the guidance and umbrella of the Civic Society. **All the meetings are open to any member to attend and say their piece** and this is the easiest way to become involved. So why not give it a go and help the Society in its vital tasks? Just ring the Secretary, June Churchman (her number appears on the back of this Newsletter), tell her you wish to come and she will make sure you are told when, where and will see that you are welcomed.

Lastly I want to thank all those who have worked hard throughout the year to make the Society effective. It is invidious to select individuals but I would like to thank the **Members of the Planning Group** for their detailed deliberations, **Nigel Cockburn** for chairing it and **Janice Crewe and John Ashford** for ploughing through the applications in search of those to be examined. **Mike Copeland** has organised **Outings** with ever more enticing venues for visits, **Ann Darracott** continues to find new and resourceful approaches to completing the defined and official **Millenium Walk** plus a number of other projects not least the upgrading of the **York Stream**. **Brian Darracott** has further improved on the design and content, particularly the photographs, of the **Newsletter** while heartfelt thanks go to **Carol Innes and all the Newsletter Distributors** for their unremitting efforts in its distribution. Thanks are due also to **Trevor Farnfield, Shashi Dare, June Churchman and Gillian Moore** who provide the essential offices of **Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Society Secretary and Minutes Secretary**. Without them we can't function as a Society.

John McIntosh

OUTINGS REVIEW

Since the last AGM we have organised 5 different visits around the South East of England.

We went to Brighton Pavilion in December to see the glorious Pavilion, which has now been fully restored, along with the museum in the grounds tracing the history of Brighton and design over the last 100 years. In March we visited Beaulieu in Hampshire on a beautiful early spring day to tour the Motor Museum and the Palace in the grounds. There was a lot to see and do and quite a lot of walking, but everyone enjoyed the day. We visited Broughton Castle and Stonor in May and avoided the odd rain shower. The grounds were looking their best and we enjoyed a lunch stop in Banbury.

Our next visit was to Highclere Castle and Broadlands. We again had beautiful weather, which showed these two lovely venues at their best. The museum and filmed history of Lord Mountbatten was very interesting. Our latest visit was to Buckingham Palace in September and was our best-supported trip of the year. We firstly visited the State Rooms and garden, then the royal Mews and finally the Queen's Gallery. The treasures on display were breathtaking and we all arrived back tired but enthralled.

During the last 12 months we have taken 185 people on our outings and contributed over £1000 to the Civic Society funds. The more support that we get the more projects we can undertake.

Mike Copeland

PLANNING GROUP REVIEW

During the course of the year the role of Chairmanship has passed from Michael Johnson to Nigel Cockburn. Janice Crew has continued to be the main liaison with the Planning Office for the extraction of plans needed for our meetings.

The year has also seen a change of politics in the governing Council. This means the dropping of the Conservative's Town Centre plans, including the controversial demolition of the Town Hall, but so far there has been no indication of alternative plans from the Lib Dems. The Planning group has met with the relevant Council member and staff to air their views on the central section of the York Stream, but again little has come from it in terms or action - or indeed of water!

We have continued to press for town centre dwellings whenever this seems feasible, and the additional floor on the old Courts building, on the corner of St Ives Road and the High Street, is a good example. The current proposal, to abandon office development at the castle Hill roundabout site and substitute housing, is another move which hopefully will reduce the large amount of unlet office buildings. The Oldfield Road/Bath Road site is also being considered for housing, but traffic flow remains a problem on that corner.

There has been a substantial move in recent months to replace old, and sometimes distinguished, houses with blocks of flats. We have not automatically opposed these because we recognise the need for this sort of property, but we would like to see a broader strategy to establish where such changes are most. The piecemeal spread of applications along Shoppenhangers Road cannot be the ideal way forward.

We are frequently critical of the balance of car parking to flat units. We recognise the government pressures against car ownership, but that is of limited value when the roads become choked with cars spilling out from flats where even a one bedroom flat can provoke two cars. The current formula of 1.5 spaces per housing unit is often far from adequate.

We remain concerned at the flood plain debate, where the substantial cost of the Jubilee River has not removed such problems for all time, and the Planners and Environment Agency seem equally reluctant to take a firm line against this risk.

Michael Johnson and Nigel Cockburn

PROJECTS REVIEW

Green Way / York Stream

Meetings of the Green Way Working Group, chaired by Kate Dagnell of R.B.W.M, have been attended by Harold James and myself this year.

The change in administration has meant that whatever ideas on improving the town centre section of York Stream that might have followed from the questionnaire, which we helped circulate in March, has not happened. As a reminder, the proposals included: removing the loos, clearing some of the trees, new seating and lighting, a new bridge, new ramps, widening the town centre section of the Green Way to make it into a cycle way, and a water feature between Chapel Arches and the bridge next to the library. They did not address the problem of the lack of water in York Stream. We wait to hear what the present administration propose.

Our prediction is that water will get to Maidenhead town centre towards the end of the year by which time we will have had more rain and the reeds will have died back. However it is likely that the stream in the town centre will dry out again next spring.

Millennium Walk

The aim is to create a Walk from Hurley to Maidenhead Riverside connecting at each end with the Thames Path. In addition we want to have another link from Marlow to Malders Lane to increase the flexibility of use of the Millennium Walk by creating two circular routes. Most of the emphasis this year has been on trying to obtain agreement from owners and tenants for a route from the Lower Cookham Road to the towpath and to support the Secretary of State in her decision to divert footpath 9 Bisham which affects the Marlow to Malders Lane link. We are grateful to our MP, Theresa May for her support in this.

i) Path on adjacent property to White Place Farm

The main advance this year was in obtaining permission from Stiefel Laboratories to cross the land in their tenancy to reach the White Brook. Unfortunately we are still having difficulty getting from the White Brook to the towpath as the current owners of this land, Quintain plc, are not willing to allow public access but have offered the land at no cost to any suitable organisation. As the National Trust decided after twelve months that access was insufficient for their needs, we have since July been trying to persuade the Royal Borough to accept the land as a nature reserve with public access. The access situation may well be influenced by the fact that the Environment Agency say they want to get onto this land to dredge the brook (see above). We think the best access would be via a new bridge across the White Brook and we are in the process of raising money for such a bridge.

ii) A404: Marlow to Malders Lane Link

The main advance is that the new Administration decided not to oppose the Secretary of State's order to divert Footpath 9 Bisham off the A404. The public enquiry arising from this order will start on 5 November at the Town Hall. Unfortunately, it will not address how it was that this footpath and the other two footpaths were not diverted at the planning stage before the existing A404, built in the 1970's, became a link between the M4 and the M40.

MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

Since the last annual report, we are pleased to welcome the following new Members:

Mr Ian and Mrs Eileen Caird; Helga Cairncross; Miss Sally A Halfacre; Sweeney Hasler; Mrs June P Jorge; Mr JS and Mrs MF Thorpe; Miss FM Willmott; Mr Herbert Daly – Life Member; Mr David Fuller – Life Member; Sainsbury's –Corporate Member.

The total number of entities (Household Members, Honorary and Corporate) is 315 to date. This includes 65 Life members, 17 Honorary and 6 Corporate.

Our Honorary Members are:

Bourne End Residents Association;
Bray Preservation society;
Burnham Society;
Chief Executive, Town Hall;
Civic Trust;
Cookham Society;
Cox Green Community Association;
Hitchin & Taplow Preservation Society;
Landmark Trust;
Maidenhead Advertiser;
Maidenhead Arts;
Maidenhead Library
Marlow Society;

Mayor of Windsor & Maidenhead;
Slough Civic Society;
Windsor & Maidenhead Twinning Committee.

Corporate Members:

Stanley Peake;	Sainsbury's;
Sands & Son Ltd;	St. Regis Paper Company Ltd;
Satin Wood Ltd t/a Walton Cottage Hotel;	Summerleaze Gravel Co Ltd.

Special mention is due to Sir Nicholas Winton and Theresa May MP, who is now a Life Member, for supporting the Society.

A very small number of our members have yet to renew and we hope that you will do so as soon as possible.

I would like to thank all our newsletter distributors for their contribution towards making our Society run smoothly and to Carol Innes for overseeing the efficient distribution of the magazine. Please note that any queries regarding the non-receipt of the Newsletter should be channelled to Carol (01628 532418), who will be pleased to help.

Shashi Dare

TREASURER'S REPORT

During the last few years a concerted effort has been made to improve the financial position of the Society such that a foundation is made to allow further projects to be undertaken. The last financial year has seen the financial position improve further.

The Annual Accounts have been circulated and I would like to highlight the following points.

- Subscriptions have remained relatively static during the year. New membership rates are still not being paid by some members.
- Steady profits have been made on most outings due to the high take up of coach seats.
- The tax refunds noted under the 2002/2003 financial year relate to Gift Aid donations over a three year period. Most members have now agreed, where they can, to make their subscriptions under Gift Aid. This is a significant benefit to the Society. I am still outstanding responses to my letters from some members.
- During the previous financial year we, along with most other civic societies, had problems in obtaining insurance cover at anything like an affordable rate. The Civic Trust has now stepped in to offer a blanket policy scheme to members and we have now joined this scheme. The figure quoted in the accounts covers virtually two years.
- During the year we received two donations. We received £485 from the RBWM as a grant to pay for a new digital camera and a further £1 000 from Stiefel for use towards a potential new footpath bridge. New sound equipment for use at the talks was also purchased during the year from general funds.
- Income from raffles at talks, whilst not specifically highlighted, has helped to offset some of the speakers' costs.

I would still like to see an increase in the number of corporate members.

Trevor Farnfield

**MAIDENHEAD CIVIC SOCIETY - Charity No.
272102**

Annual Accounts for Year ended 31st May 2003

2001/2002 2002/2003

INCOME

0	Donations	1 485
3 192	Subscriptions Received During Year	2 948
500	CAF Donation (Shell)	0
206	Interest On Bank And Other Deposits	288
611	Surplus/Loss On Outings And Social Events	809
116	Tax Refunds On Deeds Of Covenants / Gift Aid	2 161
£4,625	Total	£7,691

EXPENDITURE

Administration		
1 605	General Expenses, Printing, Postage, Etc.	1 758
265	Hire Of Rooms And Meeting Expenses	165
133	Subscriptions	266
20	Insurance	430
0	Equipment	1 172
Donations		
0	WMUWG	50
Other Expenses		
108	Various Small Projects (incl. Ockwells Project)	46
37	Millennium Walk. (Net cost)	19
107	Website	200
0	Presentations	93
£2,275	Total	£4,199

2,350 EXCESS/DEFICIT OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE 3,492

7 066	Balance Brought Forward	9 416
2 350		3 492
£9 416	Balance Carried Forward	£12 908

FUNDS

4 959	Bank (Lloyds TSB) and Cash	905
4 457	Charities Deposit General Fund (COIF)	12 227
0	Debtor/Insurance Payments In Advance	0
0	Creditors/Commitments	-224
£9 416	BALANCE OF FUNDS	£12 908

Trevor Farnfield - Hon. Treasurer

22.06.03

PROJECTS

OCKWELLS MANOR

Local historian Elias Kupfermann recently spotted that a number of 16th and 17th century documents relating to Ockwells Manor had been offered for sale on the Internet auction site Ebay.com. He alerted me and with the help of Pat Curtis of Maidenhead Library we were able to persuade the Berkshire Public Record Office to purchase them. We are grateful to Mark Stevens of the Record Office for persevering and acquiring these eleven documents, ten of which relate to Ockwells and the ownership of the house at those times by William Day, Provost of Eton, and his descendents. They will form a valuable addition to existing Ockwells material at the Record Office.

I was surprised to see that the description of the Ockwells project on our Civic Society website, including the two photographs, had been used to advertise this sale. Although we got no credit for the information, at least it shows our website is consulted and it led to an excellent outcome.



Pat Curtis, Theresa May MP, Mark Stevens and Ann Darracott looking at a 16th century lease of Ockwells Manor. (Photo: Sue Hourigan of Berkshire Record Office)

I have been unable to devote as much time as I would have liked to this project this year but am able to say that the main advance has been in at last identifying the man represented by the Mortimer of Chirk coat of arms in the glass at Ockwells. Who he is and how he is connected with Ockwells and Great Malvern Priory will be the subject of a future article.

“BOY AND THE BOAT” STATUE

This statue, located at the top of the High Street was badly vandalised over the August Bank Holiday weekend in 2003. The boat was broken off, as was the left arm that is still missing and the statue itself was wrenched off from the plinth leaving only its feet behind.



The statue at the west end of the High Street (Photo: Gerald Ashton)



Two feet - all that currently remains

We are trying to find out from the Council what they propose to do about the repair of the statue. Lydia Parker (nee Karpinska), who made the statue and is on the Executive Committee, and I, met with the offender at Maidenhead Police Station on October 9th as part of the restorative justice process. Apparently he was drunk and decided to pretend to be King Kong while swinging on the statue that then broke. He could not remember anything about the missing arm. If this isn't found a new one will have to be made. It is therefore not known at present how much it will cost to repair the statue. The offender has, however, undertaken to pay an unspecified amount towards said repair. If necessary the Society will make a contribution.

YORK STREAM

Unfortunately the absence of water from the town centre has been more marked this year despite last winter's floods. Water dropped at the beginning of April and is still absent now (12 Oct) except for storm drainage - this despite the dredging of the White Brook on Widbrook Common and a small amount of reed removal from the Marsh Meadow ditch, carried out by the Environment Agency at the end of August/beginning of September. Once a channel had been cut in the reeds on the White Brook, flow did commence **from** the Thames (this can be regarded as the normal direction of flow) but as of 12 Oct has only got to the loop in the stream west of Strandwater where it is impeded by yet more reeds.



Digging out the White brook on Widbrook Common

We have recently written to Chris Birks, Director of the Thames Region of the Environment Agency, pointing out that this year's dredging has not resulted in any substantial flow towards Maidenhead and suggesting that the E.A. should clear most of the reeds and all the "bumps" throughout the water course including the gravel dumped alongside Hinds Meadow car park, currently developing a small forest of willows.



*York Stream in the Town centre, shortly after the improvements in the 1990s
(Photo: Gerald Ashton)*



The same view today

We have also asked when the “long term” re-design of the Marsh Meadow ditch he mentioned last year is likely to happen. At present their only plan is dredge the White Brook nearer to the Thames next year. Any further details will be presented at the AGM.

HERITAGE CENTRE NEWS

It is a year since the Heritage Centre opened the doors of its fifth home in 10 years at the former Green Dragon pub in Moorbridge Road. While visitor numbers are down, visitor 'quality' is much higher, with people staying much longer to view the exhibitions and browse in the albums of old photographs. The Heritage Centre shop is popular too, and should be your first point of call if you are looking for Christmas presents with a local theme: there are books, posters, mounted prints and many other things from which to choose.

Thank you to all those members who generously sponsored Richard Poad in the 14-mile Boundary Walk on October 5th. He raised £860!

Got the picture? Have you lived here since childhood, and would you be willing to share your childhood memories, including of schooldays, pastimes and entertainment? 'Maidenhead Voices' is a book which will incorporate those memories - and hopefully some photographs to go with them. Ann Danks is one of the researchers; if you would like to be involved please phone her on 01628 482715. 'Maidenhead Voices' will be published in August or September 2004.

Maidenhead Bridge exhibition: if you missed this earlier in the year, there is another chance to see it between now and Christmas at Town and Crown in Windsor (opposite the Guildhall). One of the conditions of our grant from the council is that some of our exhibitions are displayed elsewhere in the Royal Borough - a condition which we were delighted to accept.

EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Combined Charities Fair, Desborough Hall, Town Hall

Visit the Heritage Centre bookstall for calendars, local books and second hand books: if you have any local books you no longer want, why not donate them for our stall?

Friday November 14th

Fund-raising QUIZ NIGHT

Holyport Memorial Hall, 7.30 for 7.45pm. Tickets £7.50 available now from the Heritage Centre.

Until Saturday November 15th

Maidenhead At War 1939 - 1945

Not many of us will have eaten whale meat but most will remember spam! This fascinating exhibition includes everything from wartime weddings to evacuee children to the V2 which landed at Pinkneys Green - not to mention ATA and everything that went on at White Waltham.

November 19th - December 20th

A Maidenhead Christmas

Christmas shopping and Christmas cards through the years, plus wonderful photographs of the nativity scenes to be found in the stained glass windows of local churches.

January 14th - March 13th 2004

The Romans in Maidenhead

Including finds from Cox Green Roman Villa and a skeleton from the burial site in Windsor Road, Bray - small children will *love* it!

Maidenhead Heritage Centre is open Tuesday - Saturdays

90 Moorbridge Road, Maidenhead SL6 8BW, ☎ 01628 780555

www.maidenheadheritage.org.uk

PLANNING DIGEST

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Since the last Newsletter, the Planning Group has met and considered and responded to 15 planning applications, the most important of which concerns the proposed development of Badnell's Pit. This development has and will continue to generate much debate and the Civic Society's response is reproduced below:

‘Badnell's Pit & Jenkinson's Yard

(Removal of contaminated material from land at rear of Blackamoor Lane)

We share the concerns of those residents that live near the site about the extraction of the potentially hazardous waste. In particular it is vital that removal of the waste is done safely and with the minimum disruption to noise, traffic and people. However, in the long run we believe it must be beneficial to take the opportunity to remove this potential hazard as this will benefit the neighbourhood and improve the value of surrounding property.

To ensure proper control of the extraction we consider that removal of the waste should be supervised by independent experts with authority to stop the work at any time if they are concerned for any reason about the procedures being followed and their safety. In addition the developer should have unlimited liability for undertaking the work safely, making good any damage caused and fulfilling their commitments. In this respect their financial obligations should be open-ended. In addition the Council should take independent advice about the risks involved and the procedures that should be followed.

We understand that the developer will have a resident engineer at the site. However, the engineer will only be in attendance during the hours the site is open. We believe the site should be monitored 24 hours a day and subject to security at all times.

We are also concerned about the impact on traffic of the lorries visiting the site. This needs to be thought through and monitored to reduce the disturbance, minimise vibration and allow for unforeseen accidents. Permission should be conditional on the lorries using route D across Maidenhead moor and joining the Bath road by the fire station. This route should not be allowed to impinge unnecessarily on those that walk on the moor.

We are pleased to see the site is proposed to be used for residential housing. However, no indication is given about its density. An outline planning application should be submitted for approval before this application is granted.”

Nigel Cockburn

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 19th November 2003
AGM

43rd Annual General Meeting.
followed by a short talk on “Ockwells Manor
in the 16th and 17th Centuries”, by Ann Darracott.
Methodist Church Hall, 8 p.m.

Sunday 14th December 2003
Outing

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

CIVIC SOCIETY OFFICERS

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Vice-Chairman	Angela Howorth, Cymbeline, Islet Road, SL6 8LD	627606
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Newsletter		
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COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2003

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

8th January, 12th February, 12th March, 9th April, 14th May, 11th June, 9th July, 10th September, 8th October,
12th November, 10th December.

**The closing date for copy for the next issue
of the Newsletter is 9th January 2004.**

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