

## Social Activities - A Report by Beryl

The end of another year is nigh so we can look back on some lovely and rewarding trips over the past twelve months. However, both Keith and I are finding it a challenge to find new venues interesting but not too expensive.

The year started and finished with the popular Saturday morning talks preceded by coffee and followed by soup and sandwiches. The first was a view of Dorset in superb pictures, the second, a magic lantern display of old Bournemouth and the most recent, an adventure tracing the route of the Cockleshell Heroes. More will follow in the coming months.

Keith took us to the Ghurkha Museum at Winchester on a very cold day; to Twyford Moors House, Pittleworth Manor, Edmonsham House, a tour of Devizes, Hill Place at Swanmore and Newhouse near Redlynch. Each was of interest in differing ways with varied architecture and objects to inspect.

Beryl's programme began with a visit to Streetwise. Very few attended but the venue was excellent. The whole of Dorset was represented by models and buildings highlighting the dangers and how to cope with them. The Electric Museum at Christchurch is a building often overlooked but full of interest. Durlston Park was almost a washout but it was interesting to see what had been achieved but the rain and cold made most glad to get home. The Garden Party and the visit to the Pavilion to see "Summer Holiday" were enjoyable. As was the visit to Max Bygraves former house in Sandbourne Road. Jean and David Bird provided the coffee and cakes and John Walker a talk on the singer's life.

In July a visit to the mill at Sturminster Newton followed by a tour of the town with the Town Crier was very rewarding. In the autumn a visit was made to John Makepeace's house and workshops and garden at Beaminster.

The Lunch Club has had a mixed year with a number of cancellations which is embarrassing for the organisers if the hosts have employed extra staff to cater for the expected numbers.

Keith and Beryl are planning next year's programme and need your support, don't let them down.

### Special Bone China Mugs for Sale

Memorabilia china mugs showing our 40th Anniversary date and logo are on sale at a price of £5.00 each. Applications should be sent to Mrs Beryl Parker, 101 Craigmoor Avenue, Strouden Park, Bournemouth BH8 9LT using the form below.

Please send me ..... Mugs at £5.00 each plus 50p postage per mug *or*  
Please supply me with ..... Mugs at £5.00 each and I will collect on trip to .....

Name .....

Address .....

Post Code ..... Tel No .....

Separate cheque for .....enclosed

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*The views of contributors are not necessarily those of the Society.*



BOURNEMOUTH CIVIC SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

January 2013

## Our 40th Anniversary

This year was the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the Society and it was celebrated with a lunch at the Hotel Miramar on the East Cliff. Hosting the gathering was Chairman Ken Mantock, and among the guests were Councillors John Beesley, Rod Cooper, Chris Mayne and Ron Whittaker; former Councillors Douglas Eyre and Elaine Cooper; Doctor Fisher and his wife, Mrs Eileen Rawlings, the widow of our late President Keith Rawlings and Rev Ian Terry of St Peter's Church. After the meal President John Barker gave a short summary of the Society's activities.

Unfortunately the Mayor, Councillor Philip Stanley Watts had an accident whilst exercising immediately before the lunch and spent the time in hospital instead of with us. Another absentee was Mike Holmes, Director of Planning and Development who was in hospital after an accident on his bicycle. We missed them both.

With us was Ian Dickins, the first Chairman of the Society. His memories of those early days are included in this issue. Our thanks must go to Beryl for the first class arrangements and organisation of the day.

## Stewart Harrison

A stalwart of the Society for a number of years, died just a week or so before the celebratory lunch. A former Director of Planning for the Borough of Hackney he was co-opted to the Society's executive committee as Town Planning Adviser in 1989. In 1992 he succeeded Reg Read as Chairman of the Society and served in that capacity until 1997 when it was agreed to elect a co-chairman (John Barker) to share the work load. Stewart stepped down in 2000 to concentrate on other interests.

His funeral service took place at the Hinton Wood Burial Grounds on 15th November. Representing the Civic Society were Jean and David Bird and John and Eileen Barker who were there to pay their respects to a man who served the Society well.

## Unrest in Victorian Boscombe "Unlicensed Coffee Tavern in Palmerston Road"

The water trough in front of this unlicensed coffee tavern in Palmerston Road features conspicuously in the recollections of any Boscombe born men.

Duckings were frequent but every Saturday night the trough became a scene of conflict between the artillery men from Christchurch Barracks and the "natives" who resented their swagger. The Batteries of the Royal Horse Artillery at the Barracks were usually "crack" ones and Boscombe's one policeman proved no impediment to the weekly "dust up" at closing time.

Tradition asserts that honours were very even, for if a civilian was the victim of a ducking one week, an artilleryman was sure of a cold douche on the next Saturday night.

# The Bournemouth Civic Society

## *A personal memory by Ian Dickins*

When I graduated in Town Planning at Aston University in July 1971 I was lucky enough to get a job in the Southampton City Planning Office, so I returned home to live in my Dads hotel on the Bournemouth East Cliff. Reading the Echo one day I discovered a local controversy about Bournemouth Council's plans to build a conference centre next to the Pier Approach. Full of enthusiasm and as a newly qualified Town Planner I thought I knew about such things and wrote a long letter to the Echo offering what I thought was good advice to the Council on how it should proceed. The Echo published the letter.



I was surprised when I was invited by Brenda Zinna to a meeting at her house with other local residents who were all concerned about the Council's plans. There were ten or so people at the meeting all squashed into Brenda and Roz Zinna's living room. One of them was Alderman Harry Mears, owner of the Continental Cinema and a leading member of the Council. All were concerned that the plans for the conference centre would change the character of the town and spoil the seafront. After a discussion we agreed to form a protest campaign with the slogan Save Our Seafront (SOS). The committee would comprise Brenda as secretary, Florence Wiederkerh as treasurer, Ron Bryan as press secretary, and me as chairman. Harry Mears wanted his name kept out of it.

A colleague at Southampton designed a poster and we began work on a monster petition against the plans. It attracted 10,000 signatures. Meanwhile the Council invited developers to bid for the conference centre contract. The Council selected from several proposals that of the Bournemouth International Group (BIG) headed by architect Peter Greed. BIG told the Council that its plans were too modest, instead of a reasonably sized centre on the East Cliff, they proposed a much larger development on the West Cliff. This would comprise not just a conference hall but a large exhibition space and four tower block hotels. A planning application and a compulsory purchase order were duly made, but both were "called in" by the Secretary of State on the grounds that the proposals were of "more than local importance". A public Inquiry was fixed for July 1974.

By this time the Save Bournemouth Campaign had recruited several hundred members as well as the 10,000 signature petition, which one Councillor derided as less than 10% of the town's population. The committee began to consider making the society permanent by turning it into a fully fledged Civic Society. We were already involved in other environmental issues, such as the threatened demolition of the Municipal College at the Lansdowne - which we persuaded the Government to spot list. So late in 1972 we decided to convert to the Bournemouth and District Civic Society (the "and District" allowed us to comment on developments in Poole). We adopted the model constitution supplied by the Civic Trust in London, and were registered by them as an approved society.

During 1973 we started campaigns to statutorily list more buildings in Bournemouth and to protect Talbot Village from development plans. We were also invited to submit observations to the government's review of the development control system, being conducted by George Dobry QC. All this and the BIG proposals kept us quite busy.

Eventually the Public Inquiry arrived - it started four days after my wedding, so I had to forgo a long honeymoon! The Inquiry lasted about a month and the Inspector went off to write his report. A year or so later the Secretary of State gave his verdict. The Planning application and the CPO were refused and the Council told to go back and think again - which they did with the result you see today - the Bournemouth International Conference Centre, the BIC.

*An apology. An editorial mix-up resulted in John Walker's name being omitted from the caption to the photograph of the committee in the last newsletter. Sorry John!*

## Current Concerns

### **Throop**

Since the last Newsletter the grounds of the URC Church and the Manse have been cleared of brambles and grass by a group of volunteers including Civic Society members led by Ken Mantock, Ron Whittaker and former Church members and also local neighbours. An Echo reporter and photographer recorded the event with photographs of the participants. The Church cleared the remainder of the grounds. The long term future of these buildings is not clear but at least families visiting the graves of their forebears no longer have to fight their way through a jungle.

### **Boscombe**

The committee welcomed Cllr Jane Kelly, Cabinet member for regeneration and Regeneration Officer, Cat MacMillan, to a meeting where they described the works and activities being done in Boscombe and Pokesdown to improve the living conditions for residents, particularly those in HMOs. Crime reduction is one target and another is to boost the local economy by bringing into use buildings and open spaces to enhance the local environment. We supported plans for new flats in the Arcade, Palmerston Road and the Crescent and hope to see the former Argos building renovated or demolished and replaced with a quality building. If anyone has information about the Shelleys in Boscombe and their activities further afield please contact us.

### **Town Centre**

We have been unhappy with the plans for the redevelopment of the Winter Gardens site. They were withdrawn before going before the Planning Board and more plans, no better than the previous ones, have been submitted. It is hoped that they will either be improved or rejected. A scheme to improve the public realm of Westover Road, Hinton Road and the area around the Pavilion has been issued for public consultation by the Council. We welcomed the initiative although tree loss and two way traffic may prove controversial. We have supported the plan to redevelop St Peter's Hall as student accommodation.

### **Civic Voice**

Our umbrella organisation has continued to be busy countering blasts from the Government against the ill-perceived failings of the national planning system. Civic Voice is mobilising action against the relaxations to the permitted development rights. The latest changes mooted would allow single storey domestic extensions up to 8 metres for detached houses and 6m extensions for other house types. Some extensions for shops, commercial and industrial premise would be freed from planning control and also hotels changed to residential use. We believe that the proposals could produce real environmental and neighbourhood problems leading to planning anarchy. We support the national campaign against these proposals which are based on false premise that it is the planning system rather than the lack of finance and confidence in the economy that is holding back investment and growth. We have drawn this to the attention of the Echo and the potential damage to the town's tourism economy.

### **Local Development Framework (LDF)**

Ken Mantock is a member of the committee which is helping shape local planning policies. The Core Strategy has now been signed off by the "man in the Ministry". Once in place it will form the basis and policy platform under which planning applications are decided and further district plans and policies are evolved. Recently the Bournemouth sites put forward in a Dorset-wide report for Gypsy and Traveller use, in Throop, Muscliffe and Lansdowne have been removed from further consideration. Many residents, Councillors and this Society felt that all these sites had ownership, planning, access and environmental constraints that made them unsuitable. Efforts continue to persuade the Government to allow councils to work with neighbouring authorities to find joint solutions for gypsy and traveller pitches.