

Trowbridge Civic Society

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017

BRIDGE HOUSE
10 STALLARD STREET



DRAWING
PROJECTS UK

STUDIO
CAFÉ

In this issue:

**Trowbridge Arts, Wyke Road Brick and Tile company
St George's Works Planning Application**

Member of Wiltshire Building Record, ASHTAV and BALH
Registered Charity Number 276765 Website: www.trowbridgecivicsociety.org.uk

The Arts in Trowbridge



Above - Bridge House



Right and left -
Images from
Explored
Reality at
the Town
Hall



Contents

4. From the Chairman
4. Planning Matters
5. Wyke Brick and Tile Co.
6. Town Hall Arts
7. Poet in Residence
7. Drawing Projects UK
8. St George's Works, Trowbridge
10. Letter to the Editor
10. Trowbridge Connectins 9
11. Recent Meetings
12. Re-Imagined

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Subscription Rates:	Single £6, Joint £10, Corporate £30 New members welcome - please contact Membership Secretary

Membership subs for 2017 are now due. If you haven't yet paid these, then please send to Janet Carpenter at the address above or request bank details from Janet by email to pay by online transfer or to set up a standing order

Deadline for next issue - End of June

EDITORIAL COMMENT

In this issue we are concentrating on "The Arts in Trowbridge". Last year I went to the Re-Imagined exhibition at the Trowbridge Museum (see page 12) and it made me think about some of the exciting artistic events which were going on in Trowbridge. I have chosen to look at some of the things which are happening in our Town Hall and to look at what is happening in Bridge House. I hope you will agree that these venues are well worth supporting.

We have published several pictures taken in Bridge House and of the present exhibition in the Town Hall. Town Hall Arts has partnered with students from Bath Spa University who have used the medium of video "to explore the question of how people interact with their daily existence". The exhibition is titled "Exploited Reality".

On the back page we have some of the paintings that were included in Trowbridge Museum's "Re-Imagined" exhibition last year.

After publishing the article about Bricks in the last issue we discovered some fascinating pictures of Trowbridge Brick Works in Canal Road and one of our members has written in about bricks in general, although he wasn't able to help us with our query about the bricks in one of the houses in Wingfield Road.

We have also provided the answer to the puzzle of the Trowbridge and District Caged Birds society!

Kevin Eames has written about a planning application on the old St George's Works site in the middle of Trowbridge. Let us know if you have any thoughts about this.

In the next issue we will be publishing David Feather's article on Courtfield House. If you have any memories or thoughts about this building you would like to share on this, please get in touch.

Also, if you have any ideas for a future issue please let us know.

Corporate Member: The Trowbridge Museum

Obit

Sadly, one of our members, Mr John Baxter has recently died. He had been a member from the early 80's

It is good to see the Cradle Bridge development nearing completion. I suspect everyone knows that the biggest unit will be M & S Food and that the unit beside the footbridge is to be a Toby Carvery. The remaining two units, each divided in two, will house Greggs, Subway, Dominos and Firezza. No doubt all of the food outlets will be well supported especially once the new housing has been completed.

Wain Homes are planning 91 homes off Drynham Lane, Persimmon have applied for 272 homes up to Green Lane Wood, Abbey New Homes have 174 homes nearing completion and Taylor Wimpey have made application for 250 homes on Ashton Road. Framptons have also submitted a revised plan for 180 houses in the Hilperton Gap while McCarthy & Stone are to build 40 apartments on the Charterhouse site in Seymour Road. The Ashton Park application is for 2500 houses, 2 local centres, 2 primary and a secondary school.

Planning Matters

Sue and Kevin Eames

The planning decisions of interest for this edition divide nicely into two groups, those relating to improvements to existing structures and those concerning new developments.

The modern shop front of 54 Castle Street (formerly Skip's barber's) is to be replaced with a facade as originally built. The property will also have internal alterations to facilitate a change of use from shop to residential. At 62, Fore Street (National Westminster Bank) "sympathetic" stone masonry repairs will be carried out on the Bath ashlar stone detailing around windows and doors on the front facade. There will also be cyclical maintenance and redecoration to external windows, doors and gutters. Existing buildings will be demolished and replacement buildings erected at the Territorial Army Centre on Frome Road.

Amendments to a previously accepted application to convert the first floor of The Halve Clinic to provide 6 apartments have been approved. The amendments include Georgian style "sash" windows at first floor level with smaller window openings to all elevations and the use of sandstone colour render over the existing pebble dash. Louvre blades at first floor level have been removed from the approved scheme. The redundant external water tank on the roof is to be removed. The planning officer's report states that the proposed amendments would "have no adverse impact on the character of the conservation area ... and cause no harm to the designated heritage asset."

Now to new developments. Approval has been given for the erection of 6 apartments and associated works following the demolition of the existing dwelling at 16, St Thomas's Passage. A proposed development providing 50 affordable homes over 4 land parcels within the Southview Park housing development on land at Sparrow Street has been accepted.

However, a single storey coffee shop will not be built on land adjacent to Unit 1 Spitfire Retail Park. Permission was refused because, as stated in the planning officer's report, the proposal would lead to a loss of nine existing car parking spaces, and would give rise to the need for additional car parking spaces for the proposed development. No additional parking spaces have been provided within the planning application. The development therefore has the potential to exacerbate current highway traffic problems along the Bradley Road to the detriment of road users associated with the Spitfire Retail Park.

Also related to the Spitfire Retail Park, McDonald's restaurant will not be allowed to extend their opening hours to open at 6.00am and close at midnight. The following reasons for refusal were given by the planning officer. "The proposed extended hours of operation by reason of increased activity by customers, staff and deliveries beyond the existing hours, would give rise to a loss of amenity to the existing nearby residential development, contrary to CP 57 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy".

Sadly, Society members will only be able to buy their burgers between 7.30am and 11.00 pm!

Welcome to new members:

Bethanie Afton, Robert & Jenny Wall, Mick & Marilyn Stowe, Robert Colebourne, Tony Deacon

Wyke Brick & Tile Company, Canal Road, Trowbridge 1953

The following pictures and information are taken from the Flickr account of *Trowbridge Postcards and Ephemera*. This newsletter has used several photographs from this account, which contains several hundred items, in previous newsletters. [For your information, Flickr (pronounced "flicker") is an image hosting and video hosting website.]



Mr J Watson is operating the multi-bucket excavator. Pushing the bogie wagon are Mr G Wilcox and Mr T Brown. The wagons are pushed to the end of an inclined track and then hauled mechanically to the top of the brickworks. Clay dug by the excavator is used to make bricks. Clay for pots is dug from only the top layer using spades. Hence the guy working at the top in the background and several spades.

The main works and entrance to the brick works was roughly where Trowbridge Power Tools is now located. The pit in the photo was further up Canal Road in the area between the main entrance and what is now Gainsborough Beds.



Mr W Wilcox handing down finished pots to Mr T Francis.

The kiln could hold 30,000 pots and 14,000 bricks at a time and took two days to fill before firing.

Each firing took around eight days from being lit to the pots being cool enough to remove. They were then loaded straight on to lorries for immediate despatch.



Mr A W Giles. The oldest potter, with 57 years experience.

The works was set up by Mr A S Crees after the discovery of suitable clay in 1924.

Queries and Answers

Trowbridge and District Caged Bird Society

In the early 1970s some airlines introduced Advanced Booking charter flights to meet the largely unsatisfied demand for affordable long-haul flights to popular destinations, especially on both sides of the North Atlantic ocean. The rules governing charter flights were somewhat obscure. Basically, if you wanted to travel cheaply on a charter flight you could join an "affinity group". These groups chartered flights to various destinations which you could go on much more cheaply if you belonged to one. The Trowbridge Society was one such group. Questions were asked in parliament and eventually the rules were changed and various cheap airlines came into being, eg Laker Airways.

Here is one MP's question: "Is he (the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry) aware that one no longer has to go through the pretence of attending six boring meetings of the Trowbridge and District Cage Bird Society or the Toronto Handshake Club, because one can buy charter flight tickets over the counter? Will he not, therefore, agree to scrap all these stupid rules and regulations, or at least accede to the proposals being put forward by the American Civil Aeronautics Board whereby any group of people can buy a charter?"

Tracy Sullivan

Director, Town Hall Arts

In 2012 a small group of local residents came together and approached the Council with the ambitious plan to return the Town Hall back in to public use, in perpetuity; to create a centre for arts, heritage learning and community use and to bring new life into the town centre.

Five years later, these ambitions are beginning to come to fruition and the building now plays host to a regular programme of professional arts activities including visual art exhibitions and theatre, dance and music performances. Rooms are regularly hired for a range of community activities including amateur dramatics, yoga, Zumba and youth theatre and we have 12 studio artists and play host to the Prince's Trust. In 2015 11,500 people visited or used the building and the overwhelming message we receive is that we need to keep up the good work.

We are only at the beginning of what will be a long-term project. Working with a team of consultants, we have developed plans to expand and grow our range of activities and restore and develop the building in to a place that the people of Trowbridge can, once again, experience, enjoy and be truly proud of.

We are looking forward to a packed heritage and arts programme in 2017, including a series of Heritage Talks by David Birks, Trowbridge Museum Manager.

Our professional theatre and music programme for Spring/Summer 2017 features exciting times in history, with a production of *Pride and Prejudice* by Pantaloons Theatre Company (This is one we've organised to be performed at Trowbridge Library), an outdoor production of Shakespeare's *Othello*, by SISATA in the sensory garden behind the Town Hall and expect some well-known classics as well as half-forgotten treasures as the 20th Century Foxes swing us through the length and breadth of the sounds of the sixties.

As we enter the next phase we are excited to be embarking on a new local fundraising campaign. The Trowbridge Town Hall Trust is a registered charity and receives some funding from public bodies including Arts Council England, Wiltshire Council and Trowbridge Town Council. In addition to this support we need to raise in the region of £30,000 annually to keep the Town Hall open and alive with activity.

We are inviting the Trowbridge community - members of the public and businesses - to help us raise this sum through regular donations and sponsorship. A donation of just £5 per month would make a huge difference to us being able to continue to provide the Trowbridge Community with a thriving heritage and arts hub for everyone to enjoy.

To find out more about any of our fundraising activities or to know more about what's on, please call in to the Town Hall to pick information up, or look online at www.trowbridgearts.com call us on 01225 774306 or email us on info@trowbridgearts.com

We are open Monday to Friday 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m. and on Saturdays 10.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. and we love welcoming visitors, volunteers and ideas.

Josephine Corcoran, Poet in Residence at Trowbridge Town Hall



For a long time, I've wanted to create poetry opportunities in Trowbridge. There's a lively poetry scene in Swindon, mostly organised by Hilda Sheehan, and Dawn Gorman runs a regular open-mic and guest reader poetry night in Bradford on Avon at the Swan Hotel. I'm a fan of both of these poetry ventures, but, as a resident here (for 13 years) I wanted to organise regular poetry classes, workshops and meetings *in Trowbridge* for people interested in reading, writing and discussing contemporary poetry.

Trowbridge Town Hall has been developing into an arts centre over the last four years. It hosts regular art exhibitions, regular music nights, live theatre and other performance and leisure events. I thought it would be an ideal space for poetry so contacted Arts Director Tracy Sullivan to see what she thought. From our meetings and discussions, the idea for a residency developed. I took up my unpaid post in September 2016 and have organised a lot of poetry happenings in a short space of time!

First of all, I set up a Poetry Society Stanza group at the Town Hall. Poetry Stanzas are run voluntarily by Poetry Society members and offer an opportunity for people to meet, read and discuss poetry. There is also a chance to receive informal, group feedback on poems-in-progress. This group meets at the Town Hall on the second Monday of each month, 6pm - 8pm. There is a suggested donation of £3 per person. It is not necessary to be a member of the Poetry Society or to live in Trowbridge to join this group. All that

is required is an interest in contemporary poetry. Trowbridge Stanza hopes to offer open-mic nights and guest reader events soon.

I've also set up weekly poetry workshops for poets of all abilities. Initially, day and evening classes were offered. Currently, a Tuesday daytime class is available, 10.30 - 12.30. Week by week, I guide participants through a series of enjoyable and interesting writing prompts so that their notebooks fill with new poems. These classes cost £50 for five sessions, a fee shared between me and the Town Hall.

On National Poetry Day, October 6th, I organised a free event for local schoolchildren, poets, artists, and members of the public. Children and staff from ten local schools and many adults from Trowbridge and surrounding areas took part and created a wonderful display of poetry in the Town Hall foyer. Both BBC Radio Wiltshire and the Wiltshire Times reported on the day.

Drawing Projects UK

Professor Anita Taylor

Building a community through drawing and creative practice

Drawing Projects UK was established in 2009 to develop, organise and promote projects that provide opportunities to experience drawing and to gain knowledge and understanding of drawing in the UK. In 2015, I was looking for a new studio in the area and, as well as providing me with a beautiful space to make work, Bridge House has serendipitously enabled the opportunity to expand Drawing Projects UK through a new physical space for a centre for the research and development of drawing and contemporary art in Trowbridge.

Throughout my career, as an artist, educator and exhibition organiser, I have been involved in championing the role of drawing in creative practice and education. The wider passion and enthusiasm to develop knowledge and understanding of drawing has grown substantially in the last few decades and is evidenced by numerous initiatives in the UK, including the annual Jerwood Drawing Prize exhibition of which I am the founding director and have been leading since its inception in 1994 to the present day.

Drawing Projects UK delivers a public programme with the aim of raising the profile of drawing and contemporary art in Trowbridge and beyond through exhibitions by local, national and international artists and drawing practitioners. Alongside attractive workspaces for artists and the wider creative and cultural industries at Bridge House. A primary focus is to enable experimentation through creative practice and the generation of new work, and to foster dialogue through public interface with drawing through talks, events, workshops and exhibitions.

Bridge House seems a fitting place to foster and build a vibrant, outward-facing and inclusive community. The aim is to do this through drawing and creative practice, and Bridge House is now a space for people to make, to see exhibitions, and to participate in a creative network.

The front of the building is currently dedicated to exhibitions and Studio Cafe, the rest of the ground floor of Bridge House provides 12 self-contained workspaces for artists, designers and makers, creative enterprises, and educational, community and cultural organisations. Our current workspace occupants include painters, sculptors, a physiotherapist and a bootmaker. There are also meeting rooms for hire and break out spaces for more informal get-togethers, that are frequently used by community groups and our smaller rooms for counselling services.

The Drawing Centre project space and training room underpins research and development in drawing, and fosters a community through the open drawing sessions held. The establishment of this space was supported by the Bridge House Community Trust, and enabled us to programme the first Drawing Sessions and Drawing Discussions with leading artists, designers and makers, open to all and enjoyed by many. Our Open to Draw programme has featured artists from the UK and Australia, who come to test and develop new approaches to drawing and the role of drawing within their practice within this inspiring environment.

We hold regular networking events, cultural events, drawing sessions, projects, workshops and exhibitions that include local, national and international participants, opening out a dialogue and bringing new audiences to Bridge House and to Trowbridge more widely. We enjoy being part of a growing creative and cultural offer in Trowbridge itself and work closely together to promote our activities. There is also an extensive network of excellent arts organisations, artists and designers in this part of the South West, and of course, Trowbridge has such a fascinating history and heritage to be inspired by.

By establishing a centre for the research and development of drawing and contemporary art in Trowbridge, a community through drawing is being built amidst a growing creative centre. We are still very much in the early days of implementing our vision, to breathe new life into Bridge House as a creative and cultural hub. If you would like to know more, to become involved, or to support what we are doing please contact us.

Planning Application 16/12263/FUL for St George's Works, Trowbridge Kevin Eames

Some members of the Trowbridge Civic Society will be aware of this very interesting application to develop a significant industrial part of the Trowbridge Central Conservation Area. At present, the site is unoccupied, and there seems to be little prospect of bringing buildings back into use through re-occupation, according to the Design and Access Statement on the Wiltshire Council website, as the former Club Building is in poor structural condition, and is apparently uninsurable owing to flood damage. Consequently, the application proposes the demolition of the Club Building, and its replacement with a new building to create twenty-four flats. The other building on the site is to be renovated to form six flats. An impression of how part of the site will look has been prepared by PKA Architects, and is available below (although it looks more like a view from the North East, with Silver Street apparently in the bottom right corner).



Figure 1: Aerial View from South-East

More images are to be seen on the Wiltshire Council website.

This image gives an impression of the site from the Town Park. More images are to be seen on the Wiltshire Council website.

It is proposed that there will be a parking area for the flats, and the Town Park frontage will be tidied up, with a new secure storage building for use by the Town Council. A photomontage of the present view from the

Park, and an impression of its appearance after the proposed development, has been prepared by Nicholas Pearson Associates. A map of the site, prepared by PKA, shows the buildings on the intended development. Silver Street is at the top left, and Polebarn Road is to the right.

The application seems to be respectful of the industrial nature of the site, in overall design and in the materials chosen. The Civic Society has, however, commented on the application, generally favourably, although with suggestions made for improving vehicular access and egress to and from the development, from Silver Street.

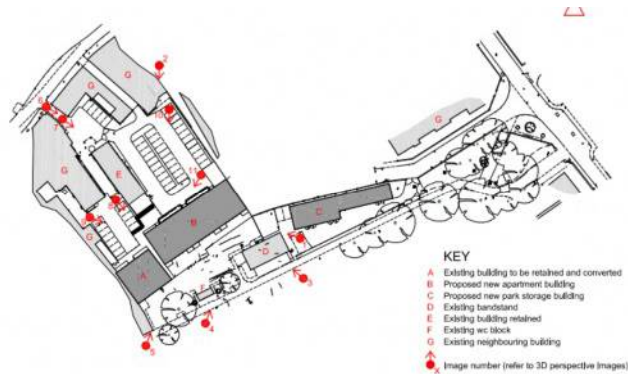
The site itself has a lengthy history. Ken Rogers, early in his Book of Trowbridge, describes Silver Street in medieval times as 'having a well-marked run of burgage-type plots on its south side'. The evaluation report on the site prepared by Wessex Archaeology (available on the Wiltshire Council website) identifies Silver Street as 'marking the south-eastern extent of the medieval town', and the area was occupied by timber-framed houses and shops, with narrow street frontages and long burgage plots extending behind



Figure 2: Aerial view from North-West

until the street widening of 1861, when most were demolished. By the 1860s, according to Wessex Archaeology, developments on the burgage plots had filled in the 'backlands' of Silver Street as far as their 'present extent', and the area 'had become a fledgling industrial zone'. The buildings on the site all date from the 19th and 20th centuries, and none is listed.

According to the Heritage Survey on the Wiltshire Council website, the buildings are typical of 19th century industry: narrow workshops of two storeys, mainly of brick, as well as ‘large open-floored single-storey north-light sheds and two-storey warehouses of generic industrial design’. The interiors have been cleared and re-structured as their uses changed over the years, and the buildings are now, ‘in terms of historical integrity and completeness ... essentially shells.’ St George’s Works, though, is where George Haden set up his business in 1816, having been sent to Trowbridge in 1814 by his employers, Boulton and Watt, to act as their West of England agents and to supervise the erection of their steam engines. Haden subsequently developed the business as ‘general engineers and millwrights, especially for the cloth industry and domestic heating such as warm air iron stoves’, according to Roger Newman. Haden went on to supply heating to ‘some of the grandest country houses of the day’, as well as to cathedrals, to Windsor Castle (by request of the King) – and to the rebuilt Houses of Parliament. Newman identifies ‘at the entrance to ... St George’s foundry off Silver Street’ what he describes as ‘the flagship of Haden’s inspection covers’, and the future of this cover in situ has been secured by Glyn Bridges, the President of Trowbridge Civic Society. Cllr Bridges has also negotiated the possibility of returning a Haden lamp-post from Trowbridge Museum to its site of manufacture, and future generations will surely be appreciative of these actions which ensure the survival of significant aspects of Trowbridge’s industrial heritage.



Reference List

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 Planning reference: HERITAGE STATEMENT, available at Wiltshire Council Planning Application 16/12263/FUL
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 PKA Architects (2016) Planning Design and Access Statement for St George’s Works and part of the Town Park, Trowbridge, available at Wiltshire Council Planning Application 16/12263/FUL
 Rogers, K.H. (1984) The Book of Trowbridge, Buckingham: Barracuda Books
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Letter to the Editors

The Autumn Newsletter asked if the unusual bricks at a property were produced in Trowbridge. Regrettably, I don't know!

Trowbridge, of course, is not really a brick town as plentiful supplies of clay were not readily available. Rather, the town is more closely linked with the ubiquitous Ooltic (Bath) stone found to the immediate north. For this reason, I have always assumed the embossed bricks came from further afield. The properties in Wingfield Road would have been built during the second half of the 19th century when canal and railway connections made the transport of heavy materials from afar cost-effective. Although I think a small brick kiln did exist nearby in Waterworks Road for a time during the Victorian Age, one might have expected other buildings in the locality to have been constructed of materials with similar imprints if that was the source.



I also wonder if they can properly be described as "bricks". Decorative elements were usually made from only the finest clay, usually referred to as terracotta, or faience which generally has a paler colour. Bricks are also laid flat as shown in the diagrams found on page 2 of the Autumn issue. The property in Wingfield Road is mainly constructed of typical house bricks laid in a traditional bond, and it is only the front elevation that has the embossed units. These however seem to be oversized and laid on their narrow edge, so possibly they are just a non-load bearing terra cotta cladding. However, I do not think they are thin "mathematical tiles" which were used in the previous century to upgrade the appearance of timber framed buildings by hanging interlocking tiles to give the appearance of in-vogue brickwork. Examples exist in Devizes and Marlborough but not, I think, Trowbridge. The Wingfield Road property is something of an enigma, but maybe another of your readers can solve the mystery.

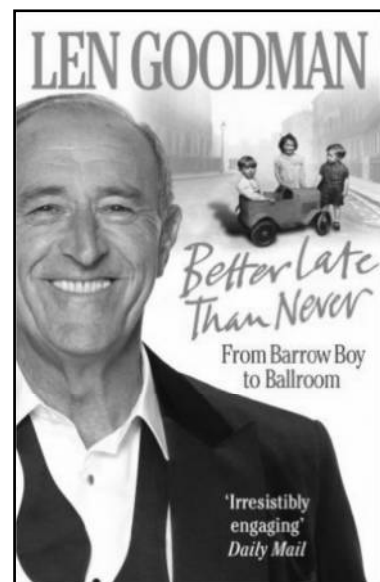
Finally, as regards the typical bonds described on page 2, stretcher bond is really the odd one out. All the other traditional bonds are load-bearing, whereas stretcher bond is used as a cladding over an independent inner skin of masonry which transmits loads to the ground. Stretcher bond became almost universal after WWI and suffers from being rather dull and monotonous in appearance (think - multi-storey car park). Load-bearing bonds however have the potential to be lively and interesting as shown in your diagrams, and are well worth looking out for. The Cinderella of the subject however is the mortar found between the bricks (or stones). Often it goes un-noticed, but when it is changed, wow!, can it spoil the appearance of an historic wall. It is usually best to only re-point masonry if it is genuinely necessary, and then never use power tools to remove the old mortar, or use a new mortar that is stronger than the bricks or stone. So, on traditional buildings avoid using cement mixes which are too hard and prevent moisture evaporating via the joints. Lime putty is the answer, and I would always suggest re-pointing work is undertaken by a skilled and experienced craftsman.

Yours sincerely,
Ian Lund

Trowbridge Connections 9 Len Goodman

Leonard Gordon "Len" Goodman (born 25 April 1944) is an English professional ballroom dancer, dance judge, and coach. He appears on television dance programmes such as *Strictly Come Dancing*. According to Len Goodman's autobiography *Better Late than Never*, he says:

"I've managed to trace my father's family back as far as the early part of the nineteenth century when my great-great grandfather David Goodman was born in Trowbridge in Wiltshire ... and given my love of shoes and dancing he was a shoemaker. David had moved to Islington (London) by the time my great-grandfather James was born."

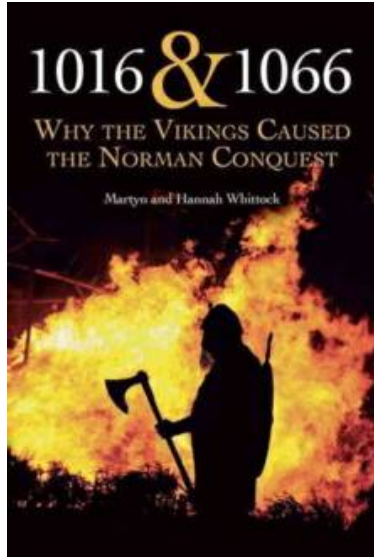


RECENT MEETINGS

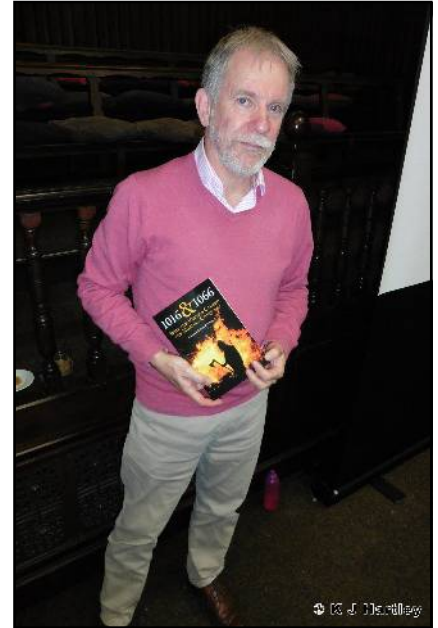
1016 and 1066 - Why the Vikings caused the Norman conquest Martyn Whittock

In October Martyn Whittock gave another of his stimulating talks, this time based on his latest book.

He argued that the Norman Conquest of 1066 and the Viking Conquest by Cnut in 1016 both had huge impacts on the history of

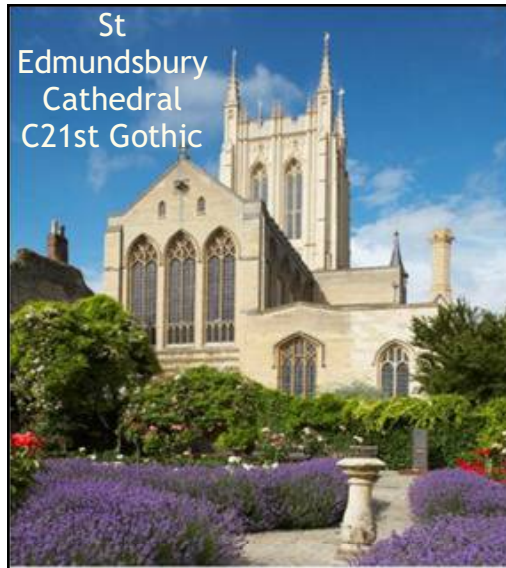


England even though now we only remember the latter date. He argued that the Viking Conquest of 1016 was the single most influential cause of 1066. The rightful Anglo-Saxon heirs to the English throne were exiled to Normandy and Hungary and the Anglo-Saxon ruling class was purged and destabilised. When the Normans landed on the south coast Harold Godwinson was in the north of England away from the action. After 1066 it was the Scandinavian connection which helped to ensure that the Normans were able to strengthen their hold on England.



Public Lecture - The Gothic Revival

Kevin Eames



St
Edmundsbury
Cathedral
C21st Gothic

This year's Annual Public Lecture (November 15th 2016) was given by Kevin Eames on the Gothic Revival. Kevin introduced the topic by outlining what we understand by

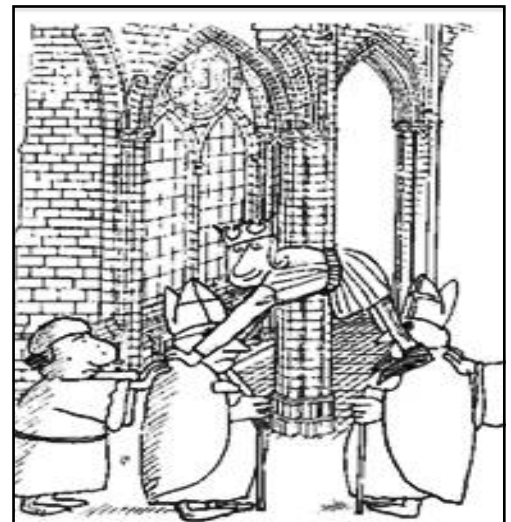
'gothic' before looking at the influence of the Renaissance in giving builders and patrons a stylistic choice between classical and gothic. He traced the fluctuating fortunes of the gothic style and the meanings embodied in it, through its 'survival' in the C17th and 'revival' in the C18th, to the full flowering of the Gothic Revival in Victorian times, with a final image of the latest great Gothic Revival building, the crossing tower of St Edmundsbury Cathedral, completed in 2005 - a gothic building in the 21st century.

How Gothic Structure works (With thanks to Thom Gorst)

- Here we've got the characteristic architectural structure of Gothic.
- We've also got the characteristic social structure of the Middle Ages.



Fonthill Abbey
Wiltshire
Late C18th
Gothic Revival





Present view of St George's Works site from the Town Park.



Photomontage of proposed development of St George's Works site.

Patrick Hallissey RE-IMAGINED

Every other year Trowbridge Museum invites a member of the Cloth Road artist's group to create a series of works inspired by the museum collection. In early September 2015, I was invited to do this for an exhibition starting in April 2016. I decided to focus specifically on cycling as a theme. I aimed to complete 20 paintings by December 2015.

As the series developed the narrative aspect became increasingly important, something I discussed with my friend Mervyn Grist an established poet. He was eager to use them as an inspiration for his own work. He seemed to catch the mood of the paintings and give them another aspect in words.

The book, which we called "Chain Reaction", is now published and available at Trowbridge Museum .

