

Spring 2018



Registered Charity 237885

This Newsletter has been edited
for The Colchester Civic Society by Peter Evans.

Opinions expressed by contributors
are not necessarily those of The Civic Society.

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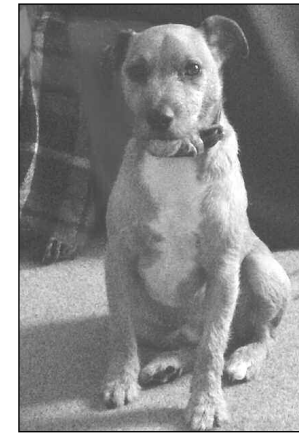
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A ROOM WITH A VIEW

Perhaps, for the benefit of new members, I had better explain this regular Newsletter article. Living in Priory Street, in the heart of the town centre, we do see life. When I moved here in the late 1970s, it was a quiet little street, despite the public car park. It was a tight knit community where many of my neighbours had spent their entire lives. Everyone knew everyone else, the local children played cricket or football in the car park in the evenings, front doors were rarely locked. Life changed dramatically when the nightclubs - Chicago's, Route, Fashion, Silk Road etc - opened and the street turned into a war zone at night. It was then that I started to write Room with a View to give members some insight into town centre living. We went through hell for a few years and it changed the nature of the street for ever. Things have, to a great extent, quietened down, thank goodness, but I still write the column because there's always something to report and to reflect upon. In my musings, I often mention Cooper, my little Parson's Jack Russell terrier. Strangely, Cooper has amassed quite a sizeable fan club and it has been suggested by several members that an article about the goings on in Priory Street from Cooper's perspective might prove interesting. I will pass no further comment.



Cooper Edwards

Mi Missis sez that meni ov U arsk how I am (nis 2 no that sum hoomuns cair about me - thenk U) but orlso arsk wetha I hav an opinyun on matas relatin 2 the town. Darft cwestchun. Ov cors I hav! I wud lik, 4 xarm-pul, 2 rid the town ov orl cats (apart from Minnie, hoo iz mi frend), men in oring or yela

jaticks (particularli postmens), bisiculs and pijins but I wud luv mor trees and snifi posts. I wud, ov cors, luv 2 cum 2 cofi mornins becoz, orltho cofi iz orful stuf, U hav yumi biscwits. But I am not alowd 2. I thinc Missis thincs I hav ratha 2 meni opinyuns and I cud B disruptiv. She mite, 4 wuns, B rite. Howeava, she sed that I cud rite her pees 4 yor Noosleta this Spring. I fink it iz simpli becoz she carnt B bovvered but neva mind. She duz no how I feels at the momint and she sez it wil B a cafartic if I tell U orl about it. Wot, pray, iz a cafartic? Mi mind boguls!

I thinc most ov U nos about the dredful torma we hav had in Priory Street, wot wiv mens in yela jaticks in the ca parc wiv hoog rumbli things and enormus loris and orlso mens in oring jaticks at the botum ov the gardin bildin noo howsis wiv help from a hoomungus jiraf (he woz aparintli corld Crane - stoopid naim!). Wel, I finali sor them orl of and lif becaim relativili peesfool agen. Until yesterdi! I hav had 2 dais from hels and it

iz getin wers!

Yesterdi mornin, reelizin it woz Sundi wen mi beluvid Missis Natasha dusunt cum 2 taik me 4 a work, I rund 2 the bak dor 2 go owt 4 a much needid P as sun az I got up. Missis didunt get drest propa becoz she noo I woz in a huri. She opind the dor and I rushed owt. Leg cokt, mid P, I sudenli cort site ov sumfin. I cudunt beleev mi Is. Missis sez she cudunt beleev hers itha. At the botum ov mi gardin iz a tree and, up the top ov the tree woz a man!!! Missis beet a hasti retreet and left me 2 deel wiv the sitooashun. I went in 2 a frenzi ov barkin. Missis went 2 get drest. Bi the time she got bak, the man had gon. Missis corld me in. I wontid 2 sta on gard, tho, so it woz

not until she opind the fridgilata and got a rasha ov bacuns owt that I abandond mi post. I carnt resist bacuns or cheez. Eni wai, the man went. Missis sez he woz cutin branchis of the tree. I am not convinst. I fink he woz a burgla. I woz intendin 2 keep an I on fings owt thair this mornin but sumfin fa wers haz hapind. Missis Natasha noct on the dor. I woz orl redi 4 mi run until Missis opind the dor. Hora upon hora! Cold wet wite stuvs orl ova the grownd! Horid! Stil, I went owt. Needs must! Wen I got bak, a dredful site met me. Mens in yela and oring jatiks and trowsas evriware! Hoog loris and evin hooga rumbli fings wer orl ova mi ca parc agen! I fort I had finali got rid ov them but thay wer bak! A hol armi ov them. I woz so horifide that I woz lost 4 woofs! Orl mornin thay hav bin owt thair. The noys haz bin teribul. The rumbli fings growl and go peeppeeppeep or arfarfarfarfarf. The grownd iz shakin and evrifing in the hows iz vibratin, evin me! I am tryin 2 B veri brav but I don't mind admitin that I am a bit frit. Missis sez thay R makin the ca parc orl flat agen, orl 4 me coz it woz beginin 2 get very pudli in the wets and I don't lik puduls. Iz she telin the troof? I am not shor. She did sa, wen thay wer orl here B4, that thay wud hav 2 cum bak coz thay wernt filin in the selas unda the ca parc ware howsis wer wuns and the noo serfis wud sink. She woz rite. It did sink. R thay filin in the selas now? No. Duz that meen thay wil hav 2 cum bak agen next yeer? Probli. I mite sujest moovin! I iz getin 2 old 4 for orl this torma! It's orl 2 much. And the finul stor? I thort, just now, that I ort 2 chek the tree in the gardin agen. Went owt, loked up and thair woz a wuzicopta in the ski just abuv mi hed, just hovering thair lik a ginormous hork. Missis sez it woz polisimens lukin 4 norti dogs. I wunderd if I stud on mi tipiti tos, weva I cud reech it but not cwite. Thay sor mi teef, tho, and floo of. Gud!

Jo and Cooper Edwards

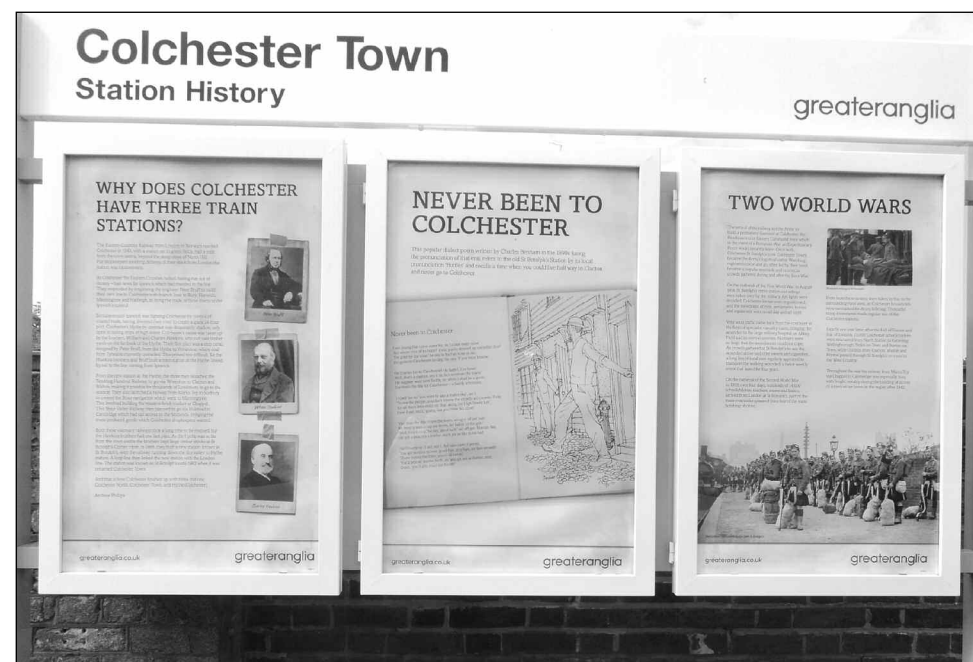
Editor's Corner

In the last edition I reported on Ann Turner's walking tour of Colchester and I referred to her as Colchester's first female Police Sergeant. She has corrected me. Ann was the first woman detective. My apologies for the error. Also in the last newsletter I mentioned the book on Colchester High Street written by Dave Stenning and Richard Shackel. The book should be delivered in the next few weeks so you will be hearing from us shortly. If you have not expressed an interest already, please do so now. The next edition will feature an article about a major War Memorial project that Paul Rusiecki and some other members have been involved in. This is part of a national effort to commemorate the end of World War One.

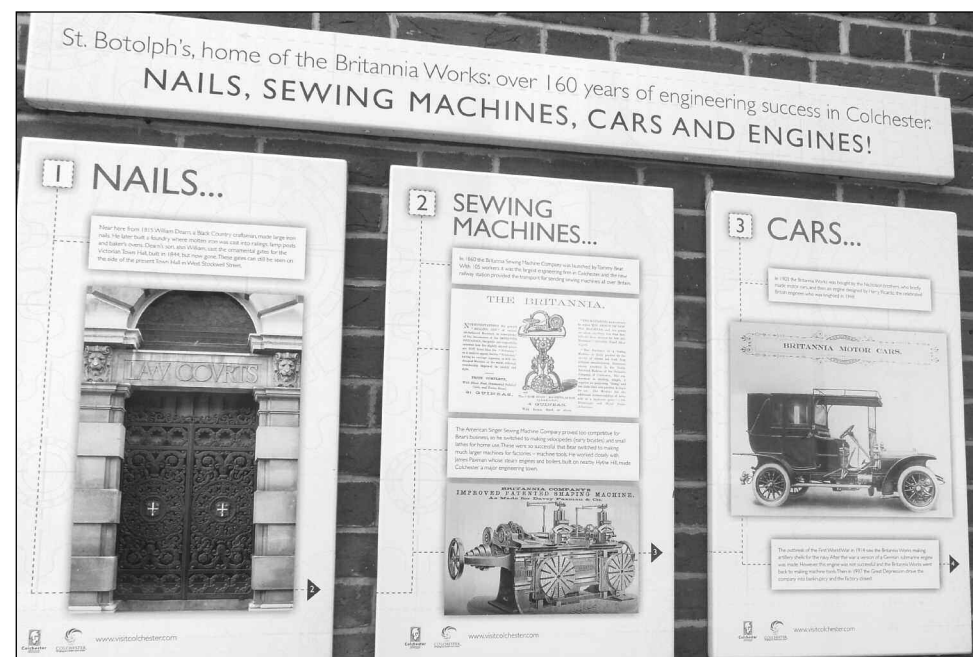
I see that Colchester Town Railway Station now has the phrase 'formerly St Botolph's' added to its name sign. To many of us, it still 'St Bots' or 'St Botolph's', and indeed Rail staff seem to know the name. My near neighbour, William Joliffe has put a lot of effect into the campaign, but he has had support from several quarters. The station has a number of information boards about the area (written by Andrew Phillips) and the old Colchester dialect poem *Never bin to Colchester?* I understand from William that the British Legion will be commemorating the end of World War One on 10th November on the platform, as many troops passed through the station. At the same time, Hythe Station has been renamed 'Hythe (Colchester)' and already has local history boards on display.

I have just found some diaries from my primary school days. It says I was assistant editor of the class newsletter, which I had orgotten. It only took me 50 years to get the top job.

Peter Evans



Above and Below: Local panels on display at Colchester Town Railway Station, formerly St Botolph's - see previous page



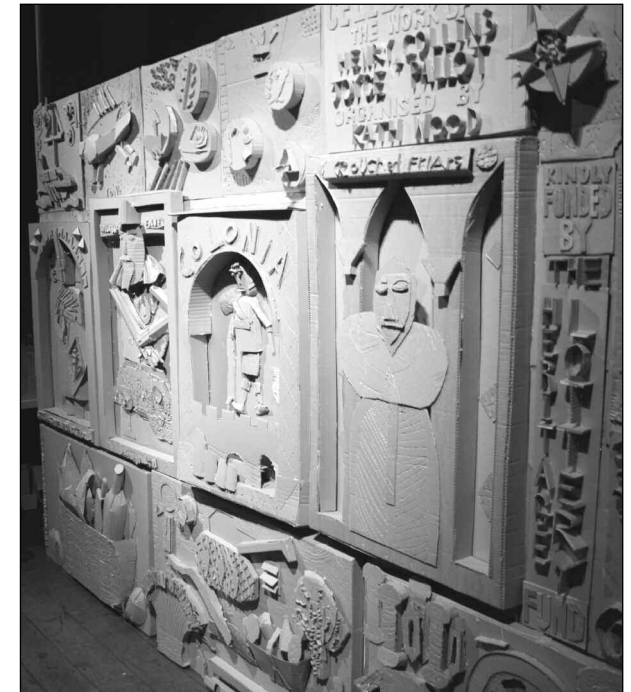
We have received a substantial amount in donations from members towards the Appeal. They total enough for the Society to sponsor a seat. Once that we have arranged this with the Mercury, we will receive a certificate from them which will feature in the next newsletter. Donations can still be received if you want to contribute. You may have read in the local press that Gary Oldman, the winner of this year's Oscar for best actor in a film, had worked at the Mercury. The film was *Darkest Hour* which tells the story of Churchill from when he becomes Prime Minister in 1940 up until Dunkirk. Perhaps you wondered how they had found out. Well, I told them! And was able to do this as I had represented the Civic Society at some meetings and had met Steve Mannix, the Executive Director. When I first saw the poster advertising the film at the Odeon I thought 'that rings a bell' and checked through my old theatre programmes and found that Gary Oldman appeared at the Mercury in 1981. The play was - appropriately - *Oh, What a Lovely War!* I passed this information on to Steve Mannix and, in due course, it appeared in the local press. There was another Colchester connection in the film as it includes Admiral Ramsay, architect of

Peter Evans

A summary report of the project
*Colchester Civic Society and Colchester in
Bloom Southway Murals Restoration Project.*

PROJECT BACKGROUND: The Southway Subway Murals is a programme of full restoration, interpretation and community activity relating to the artworks by Henry Collins and Joyce Pallot in local subways. The project is a collaboration between Colchester Civic Society (CCS) and Colchester in Bloom. (CiB). The project was initiated by Pam Schomberg and Colchester in Bloom who raised the first grant from Essex Heritage Trust to restore the Abbeygate Street mural (Colonia). The Colchester Civic Society, as a registered charity, submitted funding applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund and Hervey Benham Trust to complete the restoration of all the murals across the Southway Subways. This comprises 27 separate pieces in total including 4 mosaics and a series of coins and roundels that are repeated across the five areas. The Heritage Lottery Fund project outcomes include: Heritage in

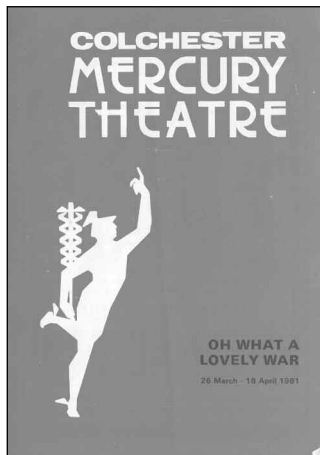
better condition and better managed; Fully restored murals across the Southway subways; an improved urban environment; recognition of their ownership in a public realm; raised public interest and knowledge and plans in place for their future management. (There had been some doubt about who owned them precisely), Heritage that is better interpreted and explained - A set of new interpretation boards for each subway about the artists and the subject matter of each individual mural. A new family trail leaflet encouraging exploration of the murals and links to other relevant heritage attractions and content in Colchester. A new film/films by young filmmakers organised through Signals both documenting the restoration and



*Cardboard Artwork by Nicola Burrell
and St John's Green Primary School*



Three of the restored murals



PROFILES

DAVID MONICO A graduate in History, David appeared in the Cambridge Footlights Revue with Peter Cook, John Bird and Eleanor Bron. His Repertory work has taken him to Salisbury, Nottingham, Manchester, Farnham, York, Cheltenham, Liverpool, Southampton and Belfast. He spent eighteen months in the West End playing *Sowerberry* in *Oliver*. He has written a number of plays including *Of Cabbages and Kings*. Most recently he has been at Liverpool Playhouse appearing in *The Farinfects* and *Crush* and *Fox* by David Wood. David played Harry Rhythe in *The Cat and the Canary*.

GARY OLDMAN
Another newcomer to the Mercury, Gary joins us from the Glasgow Citizens Theatre Company. Other recent repertory work includes a season at the York Theatre Royal where he played Eric Young-Love in *Private's On Parade* and Cat in *Dick Whittington*. He has also worked with the Bubble Theatre playing Robert Syverton in *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* Gary can be seen in *The Borgias* to be televised later this year.

BRIAN ORRELL
After training in LAMDA where he won the Alec Clulow Award for Most Promising Actor, Brian went straight to the Chichester Festival Theatre, appearing in *Look After Liza* and *Next Time I'll Stop To Find You*. Since then he has appeared in the premieres of Roger Hough's *Golden Boy* and *Strife*, the 10th Anniversary production of the Throbbin Theatre, *Leatherhead* and *The School for Scandal* at the Birmingham Rep. In December he appeared in a highly successful production of *Strangers on a Train* at the 50th Anniversary, called *Strangers on Lovers* at the Old Red Lion Theatre Club. For television, he has just finished a BBC play for Today called *The Union*. Brian played Max Kirwin in *Ten Times Table* and *Pastorin* in *The Cat and the*

MARTIN RUTLEDGE
Martin first appeared at the Mercury in Nungmye Dugmy and due to his "colossal" performance was amazed to be invited back to play in *The Cat and the Canary* and *Oh What A Lovely War*. Martin's varied career comprised of a great deal of Rep work, his television and the starring role in a film called *The Last Swan* which was shown at the International Film Festival but was sadly never released. Other interests lay very much in the artistic field. Martin is a trained hairdresser and is still practicing (on anybody who can get his hands on it, he worked for a number of years in Architecture (until his period broke) and spent six months on a farm milking cows [very artistic]). He was also a professional dancer and a professional singer. He was also a professional actor, a professional writer, a professional

DAVID SLATER
David trained at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He has previously been seen at the Mercury playing Jesus in the national tour of *Godspell*, and appeared in *Puss in Boots* and *Dorothy*. Years. He played Judas in the West End production of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and the leading role in the national tour of *Hair*. His repertory work includes *Leatherheads* and *Edinburgh* and *Princel*. He is currently in the national tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. He has just spent a year with the National Theatre in *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus*, *Richard III* and *Amadeus*. He now lives in Wingham with his wife Julie and daughters Lisa and Kathryn.

TONY STEPHENS
A Londoner, Tony began his working life as an apprentice qualification as a skilled toolmaker before going to E15 Artisan School. A season with Theatre in Education was followed by repertory work at Edinburgh, Colchester, Ipswich, Walscott, Hemschur, Chatterfield, Kingston and Bury. He was in the West End production of *The Dark Horse at the Comedy Theatre*. His TV credits include *Incense* (Emmy Award), *Davy*, *A Man Called Ironwood* and the *Genie* Touch, and *Funny Man*, *The Crucible* and *That Boy Marston* which have yet to be shown. Tony last appeared at the Mercury in *Dear Daddy*, *Jumpers* and *Aladdin*.

OH WHAT A LOVELY WAR

By Theatre Workshop, Charles Cilton and members of the original cast

THE PIERROTS

NICOLA BLACKMAN
JUDY CANNON
LAUREL FORD
MARIAN McLOUGH
JOHN EVITTS
PHILIP LEWIS

DAVID MONICO
GARY OLDMAN
BRIAN ORRELL
MARTIN RUTLEDGE
DAVID SLATER
TONY STEPHENS

Directed by DAVID BUXTON
Designed by RICHARD C BAKER
Choreography by SHEILA IRWIN
Lighting by PETER BAKER
Musical Director JOHN KEENAN
Percussionist Malcolm Wood

This presentation derives from the Original Theatre Workshop Production under the direction of JOAN LITTLEWOOD.

Presented by permission of Doris Thorp, Mill House, Blackheath, SE3 0TZ

Acknowledgements
Lighters (when used in production) by Ronson Products Ltd.
Furniture care by Johnson Wax Ltd.
Our thanks to Mr. Edwards and his staff at Raymond for Hair.

We would like to thank the following for their help with this production of *Oh What A Lovely War*: Colchester Royal Grammar School; Tipples; German Food Centre; Anglia Scale Models; Bloomfield and Co Ltd; Severalls Hospital; Mr Little. And the following for their technical assistance: Mr M. Mullin; Mr B. Todd.



*Still from the film by Signals young film makers interviewing
Hans Thomson from Specialist Restorers*

responding to the murals' historic subject matter.

NEW HERITAGE LEARNING

CCS and CiB working together with a range of volunteers to engage the broader public about the project and its significance - from surveys in the subways to public tours. In addition, they have worked with the town's arts organisations to deliver workshops for primary schools, (especially St John's Green Primary School) and talks for secondary schools.

THE ARTISTS

Colchester husband and wife team, Henry Collins (1910-1994) and Joyce Pallot (1912-2003), worked as a team on their public mural work, which began as they were commissioned for the Festival of Britain in 1951 (The Sea and Ships Pavilion.) Their first mural in concrete was in 1969 a commission from Sainsbury's with Stanley Bragg Architects for the external wall of their store in Priory Walk, Colchester. This was the first of its kind in the country, and the couple went on to be com-



Reggie Roberts with Family Trail

missioned by Sainsbury's, British Home Stores and many local authorities across the UK. They were important contributors to the

post war public art movement. Now over forty years old, the series of murals across the Colchester Southway subways are important examples of the artists' early work.

PROJECT FUNDING

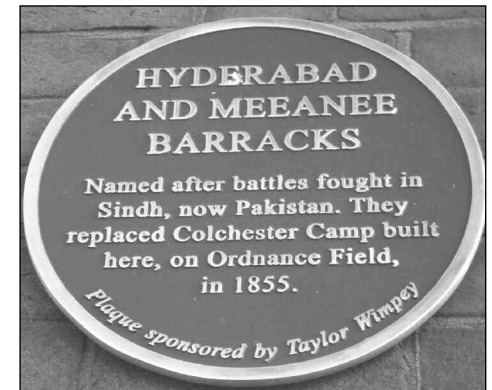
The HLF funded over 90% of the project. The total cash cost of the project is £56,000 - the grant from HLF was £52,000, the grant from Hervey Benham Trust was £3,500 and there was a balance of £500 from the initial grant of £5000 from Essex Heritage Trust which started the project off. In addition there is at least £15,000 of in kind support - this includes loan of spaces and facilities from Firstsite Gallery, Colchester Arts Centre, Signals Media Arts and expertise from Colchester Recalled and Colchester and Ipswich Museums and the value of Kath Wood's contribution as Project Manager. The grant applications received from the Heritage Lottery and Hervey Benham Trust total £000's and represent the full costs of the project. Small amounts of work still have to be completed, such as the installation of the interpretation boards and some details of individual mosaics. These were anticipated and the costs will be covered by the original funding applications.

Kath Wood

Taylor Wimpey and MOD site at Arena Place

One part of the Barracks Development is the area between St John's Green and Circular Road, adjacent to the Roman Circus site, known as Arena. This included a number of late Victorian buildings and some 1950s/60s blocks - the exact use of the buildings were never clear to most of us as we had no access to the site. The properties bordering St John's Green have been tastefully converted and some new houses included on the site. The post war blocks have been demolished. Perhaps the blank ends of some of the new blocks are little dull, but that is the only com-

plaint. The site is nicely landscaped and the ground is marked with stone blocks in the pathways to show the outline of the Roman Circus. Work has just been completed on the other buildings, which have been converted to housing. There was a fear that the demolished blocks replaced with blocks of the same height but even uglier. We held our breath but, amazingly, the housing now provided has excellent designs and are not out of place or style (blank ends excepted). Roads on the site have appropriate names - Emperor and Londinium, and Camlet was the name of a Roman Road between Colchester and St Albans. Blocks within these roads are called Rowntree Court and Albarn Court, not very



The two plaques

Roman names. However, there may be a local link, as it cannot be coincidence that Dave Rowntree and Damon Albarn were members of Colchester's most successful pop group, Blur.

The site has a blue plaque commemorating the original purposes of the site (see photo on previous page). This was formally unveiled by

representatives of Taylor Wimpey and the Army on Tuesday 16th January 2018. This was slightly difficult as although a bright and sunny day, it was very windy and the 'veil' kept being blown down. A further plaque has been installed on the wall in Mersea Road, between the sites of the gates for Meeanee and Hyderabad Barracks. (It is right by the bus



The presentation group left to right: John Burton Civic Society President, George Lazenby of Taylor Wimpey, Rosemary Jewers and Lt Col Steve Caldwell Colchester Garrison Commander, with the entire group attending the unveiling below.



stop) but this was not subject to a ceremony. We were very lucky to have representatives of both Taylor Wimpey and the Army in attendance. The Garrison Commander, Lt Colonel Steve Caldwell RLC was accompanied by George Lazenby, Civil Engagement and Information Management Officer. The Garrison Commander was wearing what I assume to be his full dress uniform with medals and looked splendid. He said that he had been posted to Colchester before and that the Army liked coming here. As compared to other towns, Colchester is a town with an Army base rather than an Army base with a town attached. For this reason many soldiers like to stay when they leave the army. How interesting to know and how wise they are to stay.

Peter Evans

Essex Book Festival

If you have not come across the annual Book Festival, you will be too late for 2018, as it happens around March. The festival gives book lovers the chance to meet favourite authors, giving talks on their work or aspects of the book trade at local libraries, the University and other places. There was a literary lunch at Tymperleys and there are events across Essex including the annual Dorothy L Sayers Lecture at Witham. These are linked to plays at the Mercury and other theatres. Information is released each January so keep an eye out. One interesting fact I heard from a detective story writer was that the Detection Club (made up of leading writers) is very friendly and they all get on well. The writers of romances, however, are quite different, we were told.

Peter Evans

Fixing the Link

The Executive Committee had a visit from Jane Thompson, Transportation Officer at Colchester Borough Council in November 2017 to explain the Council's involvement in

the project to improve the route between North Station and the Town Centre. She also addressed members at a coffee morning. The work will be part-funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Jo Edwards, as our Chair, has expressed our support for the project to help Jane with the application. Jane has sent us a copy of a letter that the Council has sent to relevant property owners, as below, to update them with the current position;

'I wrote to you in October to let you know about a bid the Council is submitting to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for improvements as part of the North Bridge Conservation Enhancement Area. The bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund was submitted in December and we expect to hear if we have been successful in May 2018. If successful the project will secure funding for a grant scheme to carry out improvement which could include your property. The grant scheme will make a contribution towards the building work required, with the building owner also required to make a contribution. I'm sure you will agree that this improvement to your property holding will be at a reduced cost than if you were to initiate the work yourself. Also improving the look of the buildings can uplift the area, making it a more pleasant place to shop, eat and do business, thereby possibly increasing the attractiveness of letting the property or future income stream. It is anticipated that further work will need to be undertaken with the local community to develop the scheme and work could start late 2018 or early 2019.

The bid to HLF is part of the Fixing the Link work which looked at creating a more welcoming and positive first impression of Colchester for those arriving in the town by train. The aim is to encourage more people to walk the one-mile route, while encouraging visitors to stay longer, shop and use the businesses along the North Station Road corridor.

This means greater footfall and increasing the number of potential customers passing/visiting your property. The Fixing the Link project is a partnership between Colchester Borough Council, Greater Anglia (the rail operator), Essex County Council and designers Dallas Pierce Quintero. The first phase introduced elements which include the elephant sculptures at the station and in the High Street, banners informing visitors how long it will take them to walk from the station to the town centre, historical information plaques and lighting of St Peter's Church. The final element of this stage is the new landscaped seating area, with bronze plaque of the Roman city, at Middleborough which has just been completed. You can find out more about the first phase of Fixing the Link by visiting www.colchester.gov.uk/fixingthelink. I will be in contact with you again in May to let you know the outcome of the bid, but meanwhile if you have any questions please contact me.

*Jane Thompson,
Transportation Officer,
Colchester Borough Council*

Local Groups and Societies - Clacton

We have come across civic societies and similar groups in other towns and cities. Harwich, Norwich, Chelmsford and Ipswich have Civic Societies or similar, whilst Frinton and Walton share a Heritage Trust, with a slightly different role. However, it does not appear that Clacton has a society of this sort. There is an historical society and other groups that have their opposite numbers in Colchester. However, there is nothing in Colchester like the Clacton and North East Essex Arts and Literary Society (CANEEALS), fortunately known for short as 'Arts and Lits'. It sounds an Edwardian name but although the Society goes back to 1905 (yes, 113 years) the title only arrived in 1987, when charity registration was obtained.

Like other societies, it has evolved over the years. It finally settled into the Princes Theatre at Clacton Town Hall in 1984.

The main activity is a series of 16 Monday evenings of music and talks. The 2017/8 season has featured two orchestras with singers, well known speakers Jenni Murray, gardener Joe Swift, journalist and Royal Correspondent Nicholas Owen, retired judge Alistair MacDuff and evenings of opera and jazz. The cost of attending is reasonable as you either buy a season ticket (£48) or pay a fee on the night. The 2017/8 season has just ended but will start again in October and membership is invited from August and they keep a waiting list. Their website is www.clactonartsandlits.com <http://www.clactonartandlits.com>

I was persuaded to join and was amazed to find that the Princes, with a capacity of 900, is always close to full. Society membership is currently 900 and as not everybody can go every week, tickets can be bought on the door. It is common for performers to come on stage and say, as Lesley Garrett did, "Oh, isn't there a lot of you!" Many of the speakers, such as Rev. Richard Coles just recently, remarked that they have never come across an organisation like it. An excited trio of young Welsh singers took a selfie of themselves with the audience behind them, as it was such a big audience for them.

The Theatre is handily placed for the train as some acts come from London. I came off one train to find Lucy Worsley, speaker for the night, just ahead of me. The musical acts are more likely to come early by road and get their arrangements, instruments (for example a harp) and technical issues sorted out.

Of course, Clacton also has the charming Westcliff Theatre and the Century Cinema, perched above the Bingo Hall. The films shown at the Century are as current as those at other cinemas, except that tickets for all

weekday performances are £2.50 although they rise to a massive £3 at weekends. Tendring Council is currently restoring the approach to the Pier and the Pier Company itself is giving the pier a facelift.

Peter Evans

Eyes and Ears

Those who have attended the Society's Coffee Mornings will have heard the term. 'Whose eyes and ears?' Yours of course! Over the last couple of years, we have been reporting all those niggly little issues that we all find so frustrating - pockets of litter, graffiti, broken street furniture, abandoned traffic cones and roadworks, furniture etc, etc, and we have had considerable success in getting these resolved. However, there is no reason why we need to be the 'middlemen' in this. As long as you have access to the internet, you can report these issues yourself and we would be delighted if you did! Over the next few Newsletters, we will give you some master classes in how to report. Let's start with graffiti and pockets of litter. Both need to be reported to Colchester Borough Council through the Recycling and Rubbish section of their website -

1. www.colchester.gov.uk
2. Click on Recycling and Rubbish.
3. Click 'continue to our new site' (the website is being updated). You sometimes have to 'open link'
4. Click Report.
5. Click 'Report Litter and Dog bins' or 'Report Graffiti' - or whatever you want to report.
6. Type in the location of the issue, then the issue being reported, your name and contact details in case of a query and any other useful info. You can upload a photo if you wish.
7. Click 'submit'. You will then receive confirmation of your submission and a thank you for helping to keep Colchester cleaner and greener. The process shouldn't take longer than five minutes. If, of course, you haven't access to the internet or find the thought too daunting, please continue to contact us - either give us a call or come to a Coffee morning or Spring Up or Burning Issues meetings and we will report the issue for you.

The Council do welcome reports of issues. The town is divided into 'Zones', six of them.



*Civic Society Volunteers took part in a litter pick.
Whilst special equipment was provided to deal with needles, none were found.
The photograph shows the sacks filled and some of the odder items removed*

Each zone has a Zone Team, responsible for removing graffiti, litter, fly tipping, abandoned vehicles, dog poo, fly posting, street cleaning etc. The Town Centre Team have representatives in the Public Library on Thursdays between 11am and noon, ready to meet the public, to provide information on their services and to receive details of issues - so that is another way of reporting if you can't face doing so online. You can also phone them directly - phone numbers on the CBC website under 'Zone Teams'. They will pass information on to their colleagues in other Zones if necessary.

Sheila Anderton

A Sincere 'Thank You'

We have received a donation of £5000 from Andy Hamilton, one of our members, in memory of his parents Robert and Jessie Hamilton. They were each active members of the society. Andy has attached no conditions, merely wanting it to be used to further the Society's aims. Jo Edwards has contacted Andy to thank him on behalf of the Society. Paul Weston, our Treasurer is looking into the possibility of claiming gift aid, which will of course substantially increase the value of the gift.

Membership

We welcome Mr & Mrs Beach from Messing, Mr Johnstone and Miss Kelly, Nicola and Lionel Burrell, Pauline Fletcher, Sue Lawson, Jonathan Reuben, and Jean Tilley, all of Colchester, Mr & Mrs Mackay of Coggeshall and Drs Vokes of Colchester as members.

We also welcome back our Lord High Steward Sir Bob Russell, who signed up at a coffee morning and also Daphne Jones. New members are always welcome.

We have recently lost two long standing members.

Marjorie Skoumal (1923-2017)

Marjorie was my next door neighbour at Stanway Green for over 30 years, living in a bespoke, rather modern house with a very distinct curved roof, designed in part by Marjorie and her Czech husband Stanislav. Marjorie was bright, very intelligent, entertaining, exacting and funny, it was no surprise that the entrance music she had chosen for the funeral service was *My Way*. She definitely had her own special way and she was always a force to be reckoned with! She was 94 when she died, but always preferred to try and keep her exact age from us, she certainly wasn't about to be defined by a number on her birth certificate. It was an incredibly full and interesting life, which there wouldn't be space enough to cover completely. She flew in Spitfires in World War II, which she maintained in the WRAF. Later working for the British Council, where she met Stan, she danced at lavish balls in many London Embassies. As you can see from the photo below, she certainly was an attractive woman. She went on to participate in some very interesting research on the power of the mind. Later she became a much respected local



social worker. She helped pioneer several social projects including the volunteer assisted travel scheme. Her papers on this have been lodged with the Essex Records Office. Born in Sri Lanka where her father was Chief of the Fire Service, she went on to travel widely, enjoying many different cultures and especially their different foods. Marjorie was quite a gourmet and adored fine dining, and certainly knew her wines. Over the years she particularly loved the amazing Midsummer Ball dinners in Cambridge, and later her local restaurant of choice was the Great House in Lavenham.

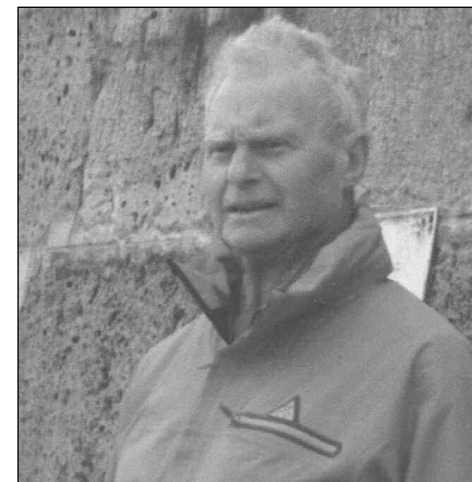
Over the years of chatting together I learned much of her full and quite bohemian life, but until the funeral didn't know she took part in the TV quiz *15 to 1*!

Marjorie was interested in many local issues, helping to form the original Stanway Residents Society. She was certainly a keen member of the Civic Society, supporting the aims and revelling in the holidays and excursions, always telling me about them and showing me the impressive itineraries. Although she became frail, she did not let this hold her back and continued regardless. She liked to flirt to the end, they certainly broke the mould when Marjorie was made!! A fun, formidable, lovable lady always. Her ashes have now been scattered in sight of Arundel Castle in Sussex, her home county, she so loved the area there and around Worthing. Rest in Peace dear Marjorie, much missed but NEVER could be forgotten !!

Lesley Hall

John Spears 1933-2018

We were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of active member, John Spears; active in every sense of the word. Despite the fact that he died at the age of 87, much to our amazement as he looked at least 20 years younger, John was still a keen cyclist and. He



loved the peace and quiet of the countryside (he was a deeply spiritual man) and was at his happiest walking long distance paths or exploring history and archaeology in rural Britain. He was also fascinated by industrial history. He loved travelling, particularly by train, taking his bike with him. But John had other interests too. He was a good cook (his curries were legendary), he played bridge, he loved art, taking an art degree course when he retired. He constructed model railways, he brewed beer and he was a fan of the Beatles. Sport, though, was his passion. We will miss this fun loving Peter Pan.

Ray Chandler

We have just heard that Ray Chandler, a former Chairman of the Society, has died. A tribute will appear in the next issue.

Sadly, Tony Jewers, husband of Executive Committee member Rosemary Jewers, died earlier in the year

Friends of Colchester Museums

I know that quite a few Civic Society members also belong to the Friends of Colchester Museums (as I do) and so they will have

received a newsletter recently, giving information about a new series of talks taking place in the afternoon in addition to the usual evening sessions, in Spring and Autumn, starting on 19th April 2018 at Lion Walk at 2pm, *Colchester's Links with Buffalo Bill*, then on 10th May *50 Years of Motoring in Colchester* and finally on 7th June, *Jumbo – How Colchester got its Water Tower*. If these are successful, there will be more. The idea is to offer an option for their members who cannot make evening meetings, or prefer not to. Admission is £4 or £2 for members. Members of the Friends have free admission to the Castle Museum and have their own excursions and events, to which Civic Society members are sometimes invited (see the Social Programme for details). If you would like details of membership please see the new website or contact me

Peter Evans

Our New Auto Rescue Service

On 21st April, I drove over to Fingringhoe Wick in the vain hope that, if I appeared in person, I could fix some evenings for Badger Watching. It wasn't to be. Unfortunately, driving away through the nature reserve, I became really asthmatic. Thinking quickly, I took a detour to Ferry Road, Fingringhoe, and drove down to the river. This luckily brought almost immediate relief. Parking at the end of the road so I could look over the Colne to Wivenhoe, I realised that I was not alone. Down the track across the saltings, a young man was desperately trying to extricate his car from mud. The surface looked firm but it certainly wasn't. I sighed. Time to go and push. Then I had a brainwave. In the back of my car was the heavy duty cardboard covered flipchart left over from our Murals Reflection

Day - another HLF requirement. I called to the panicking young man. "Put this cardboard under your wheels." Giving me an odd look, he did what I suggested and, lo and behold, the wheels gripped and the car shot forwards out of the deep, thick mud. Oh boy, was he grateful!! I declined the return of the now brown and slimy flipchart covers which he put into his boot, and he left, much relieved, profuse with his thanks and very, very happy. I just thanked my lucky stars that I hadn't taken the flipchart indoors as his car had moved without me having to get out of my car at all! I wonder whether this incident qualifies as another successful outcome for our Heritage Lottery Funded Murals Project? If it doesn't, it should!

Jo Edwards

**Priory
Community
Coffee Stop**

Fridays 10.00 to 12.30
In St. Botolph's Church Hall

Welcome

Relax with friends

Wheelchair and

Child friendly

Children's Corner

Adult's drinks £1

Children's drinks 50p

REPORTS OF SOCIAL EVENTS

Visit to Fingringhoe Wick Nature Reserve 18th October 2017

There were just five hardy members who met on this very murky October day to explore the newly created wetland habitat acquired by the Essex Wildlife Trust. Our guide, Matt, warden of the reserve for 16 years and at the forefront of the acquisition of land, lead us through us through heavy rain to the breach in the sea wall directly opposite Alresford Creek on the far bank of the River Colne. He kept our spirits up with his knowledge and enthusiasm as he explained how the breach had allowed the river water to flood through into the area behind helping, to relieve pressure on the built up areas along the river during high tides.

Many different habitats had been created; saline lagoons, mudflats, salt marshes and freshwater reed banks where we admired the exquisite autumn colours of the graceful fronds of Annual Seabright at its flowering peak. The new area had encouraged waders to colonise and as the tide was out, many were visible; Blacktailed Godwit, Curlew, Oystercatcher, Little Egret, Golden Plover, Cormorant, Redshank and one Greenshank (a rare sighting!) amongst others. On the water's edge was a hide where we were lucky enough to meet three birdwatchers with telescopes who allowed us to use them. What a pleasure to see these birds come alive in the dull, misty conditions. A surprise along the way was to see a field of sheep with their almost fully grown fully grown lambs and to learn that they actually belonged to the Trust. They were acting as 'lawnmowers' on the two year old sown meadow grass acquired to attract Brent Geese. It had been previously been barley and the field had been acquired to over winter and feed them there rather than the farmer's field beyond the boundary hedge

where crops were growing. By the time we returned to the Centre the weather was clearing and we all agreed it was a most interesting and impressive visit.

Jean Budd

New Year's Meal at the Siege House 13th January 2018

We had a very pleasant lunch in pleasant surroundings to start the New Year off in some style. Apart from good food - three courses including a delicious desert - we were not hurried about leaving the table quickly. We had plenty of time to chat and relax. I don't know if we will return to the Siege House next year, but wherever why not join us to celebrate the New Year.

Charles I King and Collector Exhibition, Royal Academy 17th February 2018

I could not join the Friends of the Minorities on their trip, as I had another commitment that day. However, I did want to see this exhibition, which unites King Charles I's art collection, dispersed after the King's execution in 1649. This event followed the Siege of Colchester by only a few months. Not all of the King's collection was sold, possibly because works of art proved useful in impressing foreign visitors. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Charles II reclaimed some of the items that were sold, and other items have been returned to the Royal Collection since. Others are at the National Gallery, private collections or with the National Trust. Works of art have been loaned by galleries in France, Spain, Italy, USA and elsewhere. The biggest source is the Royal Collection, and the walls of Buckingham Palace must be pretty bare. There are books, tapestries, busts, sculpture,



drawings and many paintings. For me the centrepiece was a collection of three portraits of Charles I by Van Dyck, two equestrian and one in hunting costume, with a family portrait (known as the Great Piece) of King, Queen and the two eldest royal children directly behind. One painting came from the National Gallery, two from the Royal Collection and the other from France. They had not been together for 360 years and together they are powerful and impressive. Charles himself was short and slight, so it was important for him to appear to be tall, this being achieved by him being painted on horseback.

There is a beautifully illustrated catalogue, giving details of the history each exhibit and if appropriate what it was sold for after 1649 and who bought it. Somehow, I had not visited the Royal Academy before, finding it (and some of the staff) very interesting and impressive. My only problem was that I did have trouble finding the cost of some of the goods in the shop.

Peter Evans

Update on the activities of Beacon House, 5th March 2018

Members met with Vivienne Wiggins, from Beacon House at Greyfriars to hear information on how Beacon House is helping our local homeless people and what their plans are for the future. Currently they have over 250 service users at any one time. A payment of £150 representing the fees paid for the event and collection was passed over. We received a letter of thanks which said “we are very grateful to all the people who donate to us. We continue to support the most marginalised people in our town to cope with whatever changes affect them. In March we extended our St Peters Guest House Project to provide support during the extreme winter conditions. We are preparing for the Impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act which will take place in April and will involve many changes in how people can access information and advice on housing.”

Jo Edwards

SOCIAL PROGRAMME 2018

Please may I start with apologies for the disastrous start to this year's Programme. I had to cancel the Postal Museum visit because so few were interested but that was followed by the postponement of the Great Stink visit, something totally beyond my control. Asbestos has been found in the basement of the wonderful Cathedral of Sewage at Crossness and all public access has been stopped until it is removed. I am awaiting a new date, hopefully late Spring 2019. And then the dreadful unseasonable weather meant that Rec Gates walk would not be the delightful occasion that I had hoped for so we postponed that too! The weather also meant that we were unable to plant the lime tree in memory of John and Anne Crook Williams in the Priory grounds. There was deep snow! The tree is OK and can stay in its container a little longer. We are trying to arrange a new date suitable for the contractor, St Botolph's Church, the Crook Williams family, the Colchester Guides and us. Not easy! If you would like to come when we do find that date, please complete the slip and I will contact you. We hope to have a reception after the ceremony. All in all, it has not been my finest year so far. However, I have dates for Foulness! Yes, I really have!

There is another event that I hope to arrange during the Summer but we are not absolutely sure when this will take place. We have been working on the production of Plaque Trails. The original idea was to find, photograph, map and give background information about the various blue plaques and similar in the town. 15? 20? No more, surely?! Oh, how naive we were! We have discovered so many and, every time we think we are there, someone finds another! And, of course, they are still being erected! We have now called a temporary halt and have sent all our

photos and write ups to the company who are going to create digital trails for us (much as we would like to produce leaflets it is just not sensible to do so as they would be out of date so quickly). We do not know how long they will take to do the work so we can't arrange a proper launch at the moment. If you would be interested in attending an event to celebrate the three trails we have researched so far, please complete the reply slip and I will contact you when I know more. Please remember that our events are open to guests (at no extra charge as, hopefully, they may become members!). Although our coach trips usually start from East Hill, we can often pick up en route. It is always worth asking. If we are travelling towards London, we can pick up by the Marks Tey Hotel but please tell me when you book that you are hoping to park there and let me have your car registration number. By the way, I do apologise for the cost of some of our visits. We do not aim to make a profit on our outings (and rarely do!). The cost of coaches is now astronomical - their overheads are huge - and it is this which makes many of our visits expensive. I am so sorry.

Monday 4th June

Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our June

Coffee Morning

Cost? Free. Donations towards the work of the Society welcomed.

Please note the change of venue for this meeting. We are experimenting! Greyfriars has huge advantages, particularly the car park and bus stops nearby. Much as we like St Botolph's as a hall, several people have recently found the surrounding area challenging and have thought twice about coming to meetings there. We obviously needed to address this. I know most of you love the welcome we receive at Greyfriars, which really is second to none,

so I hope this move addresses your concerns and you will come to the meeting. Lifts can be arranged.

After the AGM, which I promise will be as short as decently possible although we have MASSES to report, we will have the treat of a talk by our President, John Burton. He is an extraordinary man who has led an even more extraordinary life as one of the most eminent architects in the world in the field of conservation. How lucky we were that he joined the Civic Society when he first came to Colchester as a young man. He has remained a member ever since and has been, for many years, a Vice President of the Society. I was so pleased when he agreed to promotion earlier this year! I was even more pleased when he agreed to speak to us. This will be an absolutely fascinating talk - NOT TO BE MISSED! Although, for the sake of the staff at Greyfriars, it would be really helpful if you could let us know that you are coming, it is not vital that we know.

Cost? Free

Wednesday 13th June

Meet at the landing stage just downstream from the Lightship at the Hythe at 12.25pm for a cruise to Brightlingsea.

This is the last in a series of cruises down the River Colne. I still have several places so, even if you have been before, please feel free to come again! The boat is quite small - and open - but easily accessed. Warm, waterproof clothes are recommended because, even on a calm, warm day, water does splash over the side and the river widens downstream so it can be breezy. One very sensible member brought a large plastic bin bag with her on one of the 2017 cruises. She climbed into it and tied it round her waist, which prevented a soggy bottom!! The cruise itself is fascinating and everyone is surprised by the change in the river as it gets closer to the sea. It is really

interesting seeing the riverside villages from the water. And, of course, there is wildlife. Once the boat reaches Brightlingsea (it takes nearly two hours) you will be ready for tea and a slice of cake, included in the cost of the trip, before a taxi arrives to take you back to Colchester (also included). I would really appreciate it if you could give me a first and second choice of dates. By the way, the boats are far too small to accommodate a loo but there is always Tesco's, on the other side of the river, before we start and the cafe where we go for tea and cake has one too.

Cost? £21.50 to include hot drink and cake and taxi back to Colchester.

Saturday 16th June

Meet at Hall Farm Cafe at Stratford St Mary at 3.25pm for our Summer Afternoon Tea Party to celebrate our 54th Birthday.

Years ago, we used to go to Hall Farm for our Birthday Dinner. Unfortunately, because of staffing issues, they were unable to continue this arrangement, which was a great shame. However, I saw the new extension to the restaurant when I was there recently and it cried out to me as the ideal place for our Birthday Tea. I booked on the spot. So, if you want sandwiches, scones with cream and jam and a selection of cakes, all home made and delicious, do join us! Lifts can be arranged. For those who have never been to Hall Farm Cafe, in the shadow of Stratford St Mary Church, it is a bright and airy restaurant converted from a cattle byre, with windows looking out over glorious countryside towards Dedham Church in the distance. Arrive early and walk the farm trail - most enjoyable - or visit the extremely good farm shop adjacent to the cafe.

Cost? £13.95. Please let us know whether you need or can offer a lift.

Saturday 23rd June

Meet at the Highwoods Country Park Visitor Centre at 174 Turner Road at 10.30am for a walk in Highwoods, led by the Colchester Natural History Society.

A conversation about the management of All Saints Churchyard (the Natural History Museum) led to an offer from the President of the Colchester Natural History Society, Prof Ted Benton, who is also a Civic Society member. Ted suggested a talk about Colchester's Green Spaces, some well known, some not. This will take place in October - details below. Meanwhile, Ted invited us to join this Colchester Natural History Society walk looking at plants, birds, insects and any other wildlife on this pleasant stroll through Highwoods Country Park. It is suitable for those who want to learn more about their local wildlife, to brush up on their ID skills or to share their knowledge with others. Bring a packed lunch if you would like to stay for the whole session which carries on into the afternoon. Basic refreshments are available from the Visitor Centre. For further information call Site Ranger, Sonya Lindsell, on 07770814282.

Saturday 23 June is also Civic Day.

Saturday 23rd June and Sunday 24th June 2018. Lower Castle Park

Civic Societies throughout the country will be encouraged to do something special this weekend to highlight the work of the Civic Movement in their village, town or city. We have decided to erect our Wishing Wall at the Food and Drink Festival in the Lower Castle Park. For those who have not come across it before, it's a Herris fence panel (one of those wire grid fences one finds around building sites). Members of the public are asked to write their wish for Colchester on a brightly coloured luggage label which they then tie to the fence. It is not long before the 'wall' is a

mass of fluttering labels. We make a list of all the wishes and send them to both Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council. This year, we might send them to our MPs too. We also intend to have a display stand. We need volunteers, please, to engage with the public, issue membership forms to anyone interested and to monitor the wishes as we occasionally have to remove ones written by young teenage boys! If you can spare a couple of hours during the weekend, please get in touch.

Wednesday 27th June

Meet at the bus stop at the top of East Hill outside East Hill House at 7.45am for visit to Charleston Farmhouse and Monks House in Sussex.

THIS VISIT IS NOW FULL BUT IF YOU WISH TO GO, I AM KEEPING NAMES ON A WAITING LIST.

Several members have asked for this day in Sussex, visiting the country homes of Virginia Woolf and her sister, Vanessa Bell. It does mean, I'm afraid, a very early start as there is a lot to pack into a day and we have to be at Charleston Farmhouse by mid morning to benefit from a guided tour of the house the property in the afternoon. If you want to sneak off with some sandwiches please feel free to do so but please let me know well in advance so I can tell the pub how many to expect. So what will we see? Charleston Farmhouse became the home of Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant and his friend and lover, David Garnett, during the First World War. As conscientious objectors, Duncan and David had to find themselves vital war work, such as farming, otherwise they would be in serious trouble, so where better to live than the wilds of Sussex. They were key members of the Bloomsbury Group and, very soon, the house was filled with their friends, John Maynard Keynes, T S Elliot, E M Forster, Benjamin

Britten, Peter Pears, Lytton Strachey and many other artists, writers and intellectuals. Duncan painted the rooms of the house - a sight to behold - and a huge collection of furniture, paintings and random decorative pieces began. The garden didn't escape the makeover either! It is not a big house and our time there will be limited as they are open to the general public later so queues form, but we should have time to see all there is to see and to spend a little while in the garden too. Monks House is very different. Very close by, it was acquired by Leonard and Virginia Woolf in 1919. It also became a country retreat for the Bloomsbury Group. Virginia used the small wooden building at the bottom of the garden to write. *Jacob's Room*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando*, *The Waves* and *Mrs Dalloway* were all written here. There should be poetry reading in the garden during the afternoon. Cost? £45

Monday 2nd July 2018

Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our July Coffee Morning.

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Thursday 5th July 2018

Meet at the bus stop at the top of East Hill, outside Greyfriars, at 12.45pm for a visit to Ousden House.

THIS VISIT IS ALSO NOW FULL BUT I AM KEEPING NAMES ON A WAITING LIST

A gentle afternoon in Suffolk, visiting a pretty Georgian stable and coach house converted into an elegant dwelling about eighteen years ago. It is set in a remarkable 8 acre garden with herbaceous borders, roses, a water garden, a double crinkle yew hedge, a small lake and ornamental woodland. We will have a guided tour of the house and will be free to explore the garden. Afternoon tea - sandwiches and cakes - will be served. This visit comes much recommended. Please bring a packed

lunch to eat on the coach and a drink, too.

Cost? £31 including afternoon tea.

Sunday 15th July

By chance, we have discovered that Griff Rhys Jones is likely to be coming to see us on 15th July. In his role as President of Civic Voice, he is visiting a number of Civic Societies throughout the country during the Summer. At the time of going to press, we have no further information. However, if he comes, I am sure he would like to meet some of you so, if you would like to be involved in whatever we do on the day, please complete the reply slip and we will get in touch when we know more.

Wednesday 18th July 2018

Meet at the bus stop in Crouch Street, near the old Odeon building, at 9am, or at the bus stop outside the Marks Tey Hotel at 9.15am for a visit to Hatfield House as guests of the Friends of Colchester Museums.

PLEASE NOTE THE COACH PICK UP POINTS

Hatfield House is the home of the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury. The house was built in 1611 for Robert Cecil, the first Earl of Salisbury. Much of the house is open to the public, including the Chinese Bedroom, the Long Gallery, Winter Dining Room, Victorian Kitchen and the Armoury. There is some wonderful Jacobean craftsmanship; especially notable is the Grand Staircase. The gardens are extensive and you are free to wander through them. Both the Coach House Restaurant and the Stable Yard Coffee Shop will be open. Cost? £36 plus £1 if parking at Marks Tey Hotel, in which case, please remember to include your car registration number too. Cheques should be made payable to The Friends of Colchester Museums and sent with your reply slip, to Peter Evans, 5 Grimston Road, Colchester CO2 7RN.

**Sunday 22nd July
or Sunday 23rd September**

**Meet at 12 noon at the bus stop at the top of
East Hill, opposite Greyfriars, for a visit to
Foulness Island.**

At long last I have dates for our visits to Foulness. Yes, we have two as only 30 can visit at a time. Please let me know which date you would prefer. I am not going to spoil the afternoon by telling you much about the place now. All I will say is that it is another world. Owned by the MOD and used, for decades, to test missiles, it is a large, flat island, 6 feet above sea level at its highest point. Access is through Army checkpoints. Security is taken very seriously at Foulness. The church is closed and structurally unsafe. The pub has shut. The school shut several years ago when the number of pupils dropped to 11. The school building is now a quaint little museum and heritage centre. That's enough. I shall say no more apart from to tell you that it is an incredibly interesting and atmospheric place and I know you will enjoy your time here.

Peter Carr, a local farmer, will take you on a tour of the island, mostly following the sea wall, in a big and easily accessible trailer pulled by a tractor (there are steps up into it but even I could manage them). It has seats and is fairly comfortable. Peter's knowledge of the island is second to none; its history, its wildlife, its people. It is a fascinating experience. Tour complete, it is back to the heritage centre for tea and free time to look at all the little museum has to offer. I am afraid that it is the tour or nothing. Visitors to the island must not explore by themselves, for both security and safety reasons. Cameras are allowed but you may be asked not to photograph certain things. Binoculars are OK. Mobile phones must be switched off whilst on the island. Please bring a packed lunch to eat on the coach and, however warm it seems, bring a jumper or light jacket. The sea breeze can be

quite strong. And before you ask, there are loos at the heritage centre - and on the coach.

Cost? £35 to include guided tour and tea.

Wednesday 1st August,

Wednesday 5th September

or Saturday 22nd September

**Meet at Fingringhoe Wick Visitor Centre for
an evening of Badger Watching.**

I have booked three evenings so far, and can probably book more if the need arises, as the hide only holds four people and our guide. Obviously we can't guarantee that the resident badgers will appear but the chances that they won't are very slim. Usually, as long as watchers are quiet, they come very close to the window of the hide, searching for peanuts!! Incidentally the hide is easily accessed, a real bonus. I am not sure of the timing of these sessions yet. It depends on the weather, sunset times etc but all will be evening visits. Please let me have your preferred date and a second choice when you complete your reply slip. Warm clothes, sturdy footwear and a torch all advised. Lifts can be arranged.

Cost? £10.

Monday 6th August 2018

**Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our August
Coffee Morning.**

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Monday 3rd September 2018

**Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our September
Coffee Morning.**

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

**Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th September
Heritage Open Days**

Please note that we DO have the correct dates for Colchester's Heritage Open Days, despite what might be happening in other towns. Nationally, the scheme has been extended to cover two weekends and many

places will be celebrating HODS the following weekend. We are sticking to the original weekend here in Colchester. We already have volunteers to steward some of the buildings that will be open to the public, please, but a few reserves would be good! No experience or knowledge needed and it is great fun. Please complete the slip if you can help.

Monday 1st October

**Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our October
Coffee Morning.**

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Tuesday 9th October

**Meet at Greyfriars at 7.00pm for a talk about
the Green Spaces of Colchester - Wildlife and
History**

As I mentioned earlier, Ted Benton, Civic Society member and President of the Colchester Natural History Society, is giving this talk. What Ted doesn't know about the natural history of this town is not worth knowing. He is a walking encyclopaedia! He will talk about our green spaces, both large and small, their history and their value, both to us and to the wildlife that rely on them. I think you will discover a huge amount during the evening.

Saturday 28th October

**Meet at the bus stop at the top of East Hill,
opposite Greyfriars, at 8.30am for a visit to
the Museum of Brands and a whole lot more!**

We meet our guide in the City where we stop for coffee before rejoining the coach to explore the history of marketing. I often smile to myself as I write details of our visits and imagine your faces as you read and this is one such occasion. Marketing? Why on earth would we be interested in that? But you will be fascinated, I promise. Our guide, who has a professional marketing background but is now one of the best blue badge guides in

London, will take us on a journey through the streets of the City looking at the visual clues to the ways that businesses have sought to empty our pockets throughout the ages. Mediaeval street names, branding by the powerful Livery Companies, hanging signs featuring pictures rather than words to entice the illiterate; all feature in the tour. We then make our way to Kensington where we are free for lunch close to the new Design Museum, well worth a visit, before spending the rest of the afternoon at the Museum of Brands, housing Robert Opie's incredible collection of packaging. This has been described as 'ten thousand memories in one afternoon' and I challenge anyone not to wallow in nostalgia! There will be time for tea and cake before leaving for Colchester.

**Cost? £54 to include morning coffee and
afternoon tea and cake.**

Thursday 1st November

in the Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall.

**Meet at 7pm for a talk about the First World
War Memorials in Colchester and the launch
of the War Memorial Project online.**

At the beginning of the First World War Centenary, Civic Voice asked all Civic Societies to consider applying for grants to restore their local WWI war memorials. This sounds like a simple task but it certainly is not because, before one can assess the condition of a memorial, one has to know where it is! Yes, we all know about the main memorial in Cowdray Crescent, but there are far more in the town. But where? We were so lucky. One of our members, Paul Rusiecki, offered to search. He has done an incredible job. Not only has he found most, if not all, of the memorials, he has photographed them, assessed their condition and researched each one, finding newspaper reports about their unveiling etc. The results of his work will be added to the new Civic Society website so that

everyone can access the information. It will be an invaluable resource for those investigating their family history. We want to launch the War Memorial Project properly. Paul has agreed to talk to us about his research at the launch and we hope that you can join us for this wonderful occasion.

Cost? Donations on the day.

Monday 5th November

Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our November Coffee Morning

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Monday 12th November

Meet at Greyfriars at 7.30pm for our Burning Issues Meeting

This is the second of our evening meetings intended to give you all the opportunity to come and discuss issues affecting the town. If you can't get to the Coffee Morning.

Monday 3rd December

Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for the last Coffee Morning of the year.

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Phwoof! That is that for 2018 unless something else really interesting or urgent crops up. You will be pleased to know that I already have lots of plans for 2019 but if you have any suggestions for outings or events, please get in touch.

STOP PRESS

HENRY AND JOYCE WEBSITE LAUNCHED

The artists of the subway murals, Henry and Joyce Collins, referred to in the article on pages 3-8 are the subject of their website

<http://henryandjoycecollins.co.uk> which has been completed and now gone live.

REVISED DATE FOR OLD HEATH RECREATION GROUND WALK

Tuesday 10th July

at Old Heath Recreation Ground Car Park, Port Lane for a guided walk around the new (ish) gates at 6.45pm with Andrew Phillips

This has been postponed from April due to bad weather. For full details see the previous newsletter.

The highly decorated gates which have been in place for a while tell the story of the Recreation Ground and the surrounding area, featuring Paxmans, the Co-op, the military, sport, leisure, retirement and other issues.

They were designed by Tim Ward of *Circling The Square*, in collaboration with local residents, Andrew wrote the interpretation boards and so can tell us the full story. The gates themselves are works of art and were funded by a Heritage Lottery Grant.

The cost remains £5. If you have already booked, you will be contacted.

The Objects of The Civic Society are to:

- Encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in the Borough of Colchester.
- Stimulate public interest in and care for the beauty, history and character of the area of the town of Colchester and its surroundings.
- Encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity and of public interest.
- Pursue these ends by means of meetings, exhibitions, lectures, publications, other forms of instruction and publicity and the promotion of schemes of a charitable nature.
- Co-operate with other local, regional and national organisations in the pursuit of the same objects on a broader geographical basis.

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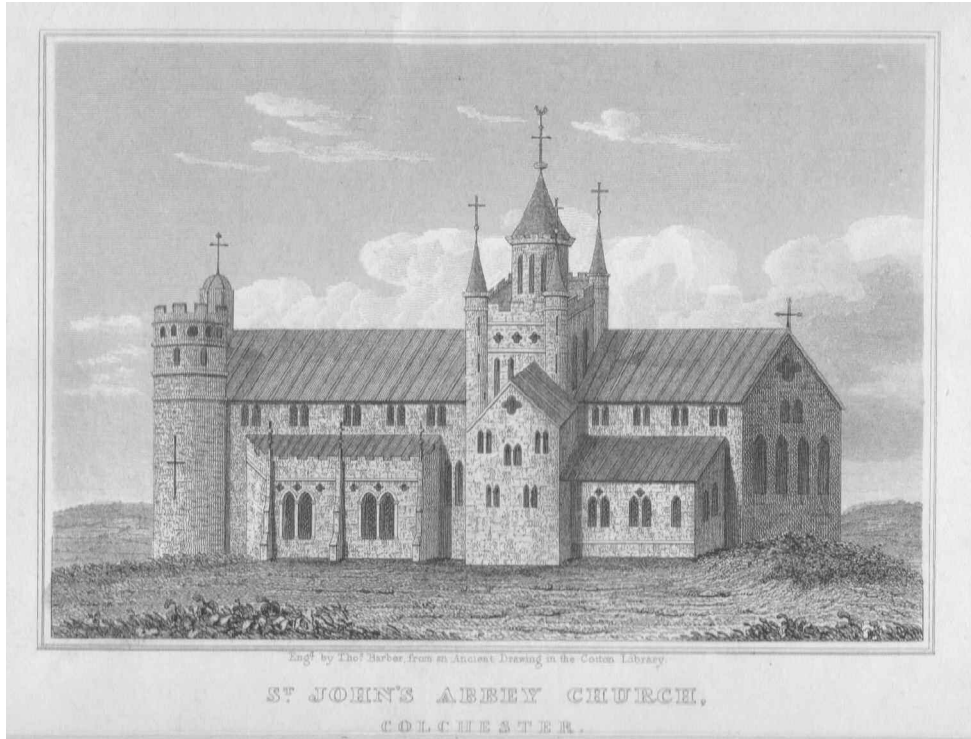
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St John's Abbey, Colchester.
An interpretation taken from an ancient drawing
in the Cotton Library