

WINTER 2023



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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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DEATH OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Late in the afternoon of the 8th September 2022, a number of Colchester Civic Society members were gathered together at the Town House for a briefing about Colchester's Town Deal Funding. Just as the meeting was drawing to a close, the very sad news of the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II was announced by the BBC. How lucky we were that the Bishop of Colchester, one of our Vice Presidents, was with us, as what followed was one of those moments in life that all those present will never forget. Bishop Roger stood, interrupted the meeting, and told us all what had happened. He called for a minute of silence. I have never known such silence. It was absolute. It was eventually broken by the Bishop who spoke the following words:

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord
And let light perpetual shine upon them.
May she rest in peace.

You will no doubt have seen the portrait of the Queen, shown in this news-post, because it has been used by the BBC as the definitive image of the Queen during their recent broadcasts. What you may not be aware of is that the 2.4 metre x 1.5 metre portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II by Richard Stone hangs in the Moot Hall in Colchester's Town Hall.



It was commissioned by the Borough of Colchester, following a request to the Queen's private secretary by Sir Bob Russell. The work on this portrait spanned three years and was completed in 1992.

Speaking to the BBC recently Richard Stone said he was "extremely proud" his work was chosen by the BBC as a "definitive image" of Her Majesty for its obituary broadcasts. He lives locally and was brought up and educated in Colchester.

Jo Edwards

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THE ROLE OF CHAIR OF THE SOCIETY

As many of you know, because of Covid, I have 'overstayed my welcome' as Chair of the Civic Society, having exceeded the period in office allowed under the terms of our Constitution. The Charity Commissioners, very aware of the problems that Covid has created in smaller organisations, agreed to me staying in post until the end of December whilst we sought someone to replace me. I am extremely pleased to announce that we have found that person. Howard Davies, who is an Executive Committee member, has offered his services, which is absolutely wonderful. Our Constitution allows the Executive Committee to appoint a new Chair but we will obviously need to confirm his position at the AGM next June. Howard will take up the role on New Year's Day. I wish him the best of luck!

I will leave Howard to introduce himself and simply say that I am thrilled that he has agreed to take over from me. His professional experience and his knowledge and love of Colchester make him the ideal person for the role. Added to that, he is a thoroughly nice man!

You haven't got rid of me yet, though. I will still be organising our Programme and will also be giving Howard as much support as I can.

Jo Edwards

Chair of Colchester Civic Society 2016-2022

MESSAGE FROM HOWARD



Howard with his dog, Percy

Born in Epping, Essex, I kicked off my career in the Private Financial Sector, London in the late 70s. I moved to Colchester during the mid eighties whilst working in the city. I have raised my family, which became a blended family and a full brood of 6 grandchildren, in Colchester for nearly 40yrs. This has given me a huge sense of Colchester pride having lived, worked and breathed in this historic City.

A career change in the early 2000s took me to the University of Essex to study Politics and Economics, this led to a job in the Public Sector in 2003 at Colchester Borough Council for economic development and regeneration. It was whilst carrying out this role that I first became involved with the Civic Society, usually as part of updates and consultations connected to regeneration projects in the Town Centre - some of you may remember those presentations, which I particularly enjoyed and made me realise how important an impact the Society has in Colchester, supported by passionate people.

Through redundancies and council reshaping, I left Colchester Borough Council in 2017 and spent 12 months in the private sector with OMC Investments, the owner of Greyfriars. Having joined the Civic Society in 2019 I was invited onto the executive committee. I am currently working full time at the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, which was set up by central Government and brings together business, local government and education partners, aiming to drive economic growth by setting priorities for investment in the south east (Essex, East Sussex and Kent).

I am looking forward to this new role, with extensive support from my colleagues of the Executive Committee and look forward to meeting many more of the members over the coming year.

Howard Davies



ROOM WITH A VIEW

Life in Priory Street is rarely dull and what I see from my windows, the front overlooking the street and the back with wonderful views across the valley of the River Lose as far as the University Towers, never leaves me short of subject matter for this regular article in our Newsletter. However, this time, at the suggestion of Rosemary Jewers, I am going to tell you about my view from another window, that of the Rose Room at Grey Friars.

A few weeks ago, I was minding my own business, doing some paperwork, when my phone rang. I answered it and a voice said, 'I am sorry to trouble you. My name is Liz. I work for a company called Topical Productions and we would love to come and film you doing your survey of BT telephone kiosks. It's for the BBC's One Show!' My immediate reaction was laughter. For goodness sake! It is not long since Toby Walne from the Sunday Mail came, with a photographer, to talk to us about our kiosk surveys.

Perhaps I'd better give a bit of background for those new to the Society. In 2018, at one of our monthly Coffee Mornings, somebody raised the condition of telephone kiosks in the town. Sheila Anderton and I went to investigate and were horrified to find that 27 out of 44 didn't have working phones. Some didn't have phones at all! We contacted BT, found a wonderfully helpful man who came to Colchester to look for himself and were thrilled to bits when he immediately found a team of engineers to come and sort the problems out. In the two weeks either side of Christmas 2018, the phones were mended, missing glass and Perspex replaced, kiosks were thoroughly cleaned and 3 of our (listed) red K6 boxes were painted. A door was ordered for the fourth, the original having been damaged beyond repair. BT don't check kiosks so we promised to keep an eye on them. Two further surveys were done and faults reported before Covid intervened. I told Liz that we hadn't done one since the end of 2020 but she was not perturbed. Rather caught on the hop, I found myself agreeing. It wasn't until I put the phone down that I really took in the enormity of what I had done.

I found, to my horror, that Committee members were either otherwise engaged on the day proposed for filming or camera shy. I was on my own! Luckily, Bob Russell agreed to help me. He was happy about being filmed. I certainly wasn't. The expression 'Hoist with one's own petard' sprang to mind.

Several conversations with Liz followed. We agreed that filming on a Sunday would be sensible and I offered to send her photos of the kiosks I thought would be best. These were chosen for a reason, particularly the two outside Lloyds Bank, opposite the Town Hall, where BT had just applied for planning permission to install a massive, illuminated, BT Street Hub. The film crew were coming from the other side of London ready to start filming at 8am, as was the presenter who, I discovered, was none other than Brian Conley, currently playing the role of Rocky in East Enders. I realised that we would need to meet and sort out what we were going to do first, preferably over coffee, so I spoke to Greyfriars who, extremely kindly, booked us into the Rose Room and agreed to allow us all to park in their car park. What a blessing that was, because the weather on the day was absolutely FOUL!

And so it was that Bob and I found ourselves at Greyfriars with Steve the cameraman at 8am on a Sunday, waiting for Richard, the Director, and Brian. The minutes crept by. Steve made a phone call. Disaster had struck! Richard had gone in search of Brian, who, at the last moment on Saturday evening, had decided to stay overnight in Colchester. Easier said than done because all the hotels were booked but he managed to get a room at the George. He likened the experience to a night in Beirut! Getting ready in the morning, he switched the hairdryer on and it blew up! Finding a replacement took time but there was no way he was going to leave his hair unstyled. I chuckled. I had towel dried mine, only remembering to run a comb through it as I drove into Greyfriars car park!



Once Brian and Richard arrived, the fun began. By this time, the rain had really set in. Greyfriars had given permission for filming inside, so they seated me in the bay window (yes, this was to be my temporary Room with A View). From the window, there is a lovely view of the red K6 box that stands against the front wall of the hotel. This was to form the backdrop to the later interview. A camera was set up to film me, sitting at the table with my notebook open in front of me, pen in one hand and mobile phone in the other. Another camera, on a tripod, was set up by the kiosk and Bob, coins in hand, was taken outside to be filmed using the phone in the kiosk to call me to tell me that it was working and to describe the general condition of the kiosk. Well, that was the plan. Unfortunately, the phone didn't work and Bob was forced to ring me using Richard's mobile. A rather surreal conversation ensued. I can't imagine that there are many people about who have been filmed, early on a Sunday morning, having a conversation with a rain drenched

Knight of the Realm about an urine drenched K6 telephone kiosk!

Eventually, the crew were satisfied and they returned to the warmth of the Rose Room, ready to interview me about the Society's phone checking project, our views about BT kiosks and also our views about the new street hubs. I had particularly asked for that question. Brian interviewed me, having questions fed to him by Richard. Brian is a genuinely nice man, incredibly easy and fun to talk to. The whole interview was very laid back and stress free, in fact, really enjoyable. I have little recollection of what I actually said but, as I was with them for over 7 hours and I doubt that our segment in the programme will be longer than 2 minutes, it really doesn't matter



that much!! Following the interview, Brian and I were both filmed having somewhat random conversations in a role play exercise as filming outdoors was not going to be viable. The rain was sheeting down. Bob had to leave but not before he and I had our photo taken with Brian.

Once Bob had gone, we were off to film Brian checking other kiosks and supposedly reporting back to me as I sat in my Room with a View. Actually, as I drove them, I watched from my Car with a View! First to the (non working!) K6 kiosk in Abbeygate Street where, once there was a short break from the downpours, we caused quite a stir. A woman spotted Brian and yelled 'It's Bobby Davro!' He laughed, corrected her and agreed to a selfie with her and her son, who looked slightly bemused! It was here that the crew stopped a couple

of women to ask them about the need for public phones these days. One said that they are a lifeline for her as she is in a refuge and has no mobile.

Finally, we went to those kiosks in High St. By this time, the men were asking about a Starbucks. 'No Starbucks', I said, 'What about Greggs?'. The reaction was all I'd expected - and more. They flew out of the car as soon as I pulled into a parking spot (I am so pleased I have a blue badge!). Brian returned with sausage rolls (what else??) for me - and yes, for those concerned about my poor Jack Russell, Cooper, abandoned at home, some for him, too! Having eaten their sausage rolls



and drunk their coffee, cameras etc were grabbed and off they went to film. The heavens opened again. Boy, oh boy, did it rain! The nearest shelter was White Stuff where they were welcomed with open arms as they increased the footfall in the shop hugely! Whilst there, Brian, again, was grabbed for a lot of selfies. More of that later. Eventually, the rain eased off and Brian found his first working phones in the kiosks opposite the Town Hall. As I sat in the car, several people passed me, looking over their shoulders. 'That was Bradley Walsh!' Poor Brian!

We eventually returned to Greyfriars where I left them to make a Zoom call. They had intended to continue on to Enfield for more filming but the rain had caused so many problems they abandoned that.

The day that I had been dreading was actually huge fun and I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Steve and Richard (sitting in the back of my car in the photo above) were delightful and Brian was, as I said before, utterly charming. He really went out of his way to make people happy. Whilst he was chatting to three women staying at Greyfriars, who were unbelievably excited to meet him, I noticed another who was sitting with a man who was speaking to someone on his phone. She was also very excited to see Brian so I drew his attention to her. He bounded across the room to say hello. Her companion told the person he was speaking to that Brian Conley was standing in front of him. It was obvious that they didn't believe him, so Brian took the phone from him and introduced himself! It caused great amusement and such joy.

Back to the selfies. That evening, Bob's daughter sent him a photo. 'Look who I met today!' It was one of the selfies taken in White Stuff and was a brilliant photo of her with Brian. She had absolutely no idea that Bob had been with him that morning. He sent her the photo of the three of us. 'Me too!'

The One Show hoped that we could check at least some of the remaining kiosks in Colchester before the programme was aired. During the following week, Sheila, Ged Dickinson, Richard Arnopp and I blitzed the town, checking every kiosk. Our report is winging its way to BT as I write this. It does not make easy reading. Only 18 of the 31 kiosks have a fully functioning phone and most are absolutely filthy. Let's hope that BT respond quickly!

Jo Edwards



ROOM WITH A VIEW – THE SEQUEL

Note to self:

Never agree to be interviewed by BBC Essex in the presence of Colchester Pipes and Drums!

The new and very large cafe bar at the Mercury was packed when I arrived. The noise levels were such that I wondered how on earth the BBC crew were coping as they tried to interview a string of people for their live broadcast in the build up to the granting of City status to Colchester later in the evening. Shortly after I arrived, they spoke to Lt Col Ed Rankin, the Garrison Commander. A little later it was the turn of Sam Good from the BID. The crowd got bigger and the crush greater. The noise became worse as people started shouting to each other in order to be heard. I moved to the table in the corner, very close to the open doors. It was a little quieter there.

Now it was the turn of Will Quince. He stood a couple of yards in front of me, with the BBC interviewer holding a large mic as close as possible to his face. He had been speaking for a couple of minutes when, all of a sudden, the Colchester Pipes and Drums, who, under the cover of darkness, had surreptitiously gathered JUST outside the open doors, started to play. There were a lot of them and the noise was extraordinary. I assumed that they would move but they didn't. Poor Will, normally unfazed by 'noises off', looked a bit shaken. He paused and then manfully struggled on with what he had to say.

When he had finished, the crew turned to me. Quickly introducing me, I think, the interviewer asked me a question. The rest of me is falling apart but my ears do work reasonably well - or so I thought. I couldn't hear a word he was saying. I resorted to lip reading. And that is how we continued. I couldn't even hear my own voice! My concentration went straight out of the window - or should I say doors. I haven't listened to the interview on BBC Sounds. I dread to think what I said. I didn't finish what I had intended to say because the noise became even more intense. It was hopeless. Shortly afterwards, the band moved to join the procession which was getting ready to leave and the BBC crew interviewed their last person. Suddenly, everybody left. One minute the cafe was overflowing with people and the next it was almost empty - just me and the staff. The parade moved off and all was quiet. I should have watched them leave but I didn't. I ordered a very strong black coffee instead!!

I love bagpipes. I always have and I always will. However!!

What did I try to say? Very much aware of the mixed views within our Civic Society membership, I said that I, like many other Civic Society members, would always think of Colchester as a beloved historic market town, However, I felt that the granting of City status was an incredible honour and we should all be extremely proud. I then went on to address the terrible negativity that has been so prevalent on social media. So many people have said that we are not worthy. Of course we are! I listed many of the reasons why. Our history, our museums, our University and superb schools, the Garrison, the theatres, Firstsite and the soon to reopen Minories, the Arts Centre, our countryside and coast, internationally important nature reserves, the Zoo, our sports facilities and even Colchester United! I asked people to stop thinking that the amorphous 'They' should do everything to make the City even more special and to start thinking 'I' or 'We' instead, as individuals or community groups can move mountains! I suggested joining their Residents' Association and, if there wasn't one in their area, start one. I suggested joining groups like Colchester in Bloom, Friends of Castle Park, Colchester Litter Pickers or even the Civic Society. I mentioned the Masterplan but didn't quite finish what I was going to say. Never mind. Looking at social media this morning, I was saddened. However, if I made just one person think, it was worth the ringing ears!

Jo Edwards (Slightly deafened)

TRAM FOLLEY

Sir Bob Russell was keen to commemorate the Colchester Trams and the ideal way to use a footpath between Magdalen Street and Military Road, on the site of the Tram Depot (later Bus Garage) to do so. It was a long story and Sir Bob Issued a press release to explain the process, which of course took some time to achieve, as he explains below;

“It is more than 90 years since trams ran in Colchester, but there is now a permanent reminder of the time when traffic congestion was non-existent and there was cheap public transport run by the Council.”

A new pedestrian path through the site of the former Tram Shed in Magdalen Street, through to Military Road, has been named “Tram Folley” at the suggestion of Colchester High Steward Sir Bob Russell with the support of Colchester Civic Society.



Both ends of Tram Folley, as named by Sir Bob Russell

Trams operated in Colchester from 1904 to 1929, when all the tracks were ripped up and buses took over.

The Tram Shed then became the Corporation Bus Garage. All the buildings were demolished a few years ago and blocks of student flats have been built on the site, with a new pedestrian path between Magdalen Street and Military Road.

Sir Bob said: “I am grateful to the owners of the student accommodation, a company called HOST, and the Street Naming team at Colchester Borough Council for their support. It would not have happened without their agreement, as did Colchester Civic Society which is a consultee on street naming.”

It is thought that the word “folley” for a path has military origins, because the first two known paths to be so named were “Camp Folley North” and “Camp Folley South” when the original hutted barracks was built between Military Road and Mersea Road in the middle of the 19th century. These were replaced with the brick-built Meeanee and Hyderabad Barracks at the end of that century.

In the mid-1880s “Artillery Barracks Folley” was created, off Butt Road, along the northern side of the barracks which were later re-named Le Cateau Barracks although the name of the Folley was not changed.

A footpath from near the Plum Hall corner of Mersea Road through to the King George Estate, across Meyrick and Pownall Crescents, is named “The Folley”.

When the New Town Estate was built in the 1880s, the field footpath behind houses in Magdalen Street was given the name “Kendall Road Folley”.

The public footpath separating Upper and Lower Castle Park, next to the Roman Wall, is named “Park Folley West” and “Park Folley East” although there is no indication where this splits.

“Tram Folley” is the latest name which Sir Bob has suggested for new roads and other developments. Over the years more than 30 names have been adopted.

There were five tram routes, all serving the town centre. They were to North Station, East Gates, The Hythe, Recreation Ground (New Town) and Lexden.

Two other features of when Colchester had trams are also part of the new development, requested by both the Civic Society and Sir Bob. Set within the paving of “Tram Folley” is a section of tram rails. The brick façade where the tram shed abutted Military Road has been retained as a Condition of the Planning Consent because of its importance to the street scene. Joined to a small new-build, it now hides an electricity sub-station.”

Sir Bob Russell



LETTER FROM AMERICA – RESPONSE TO ARTICLE IN THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER FROM ANOTHER FORMER HIGH STREET RESIDENT

I read, with a great deal of interest, the Letter from America in the last edition of the Newsletter. Adrian was not the only child living in High Street in the 1950s. I did too, although my home was a lot further down the street, next door but two then, but next door but one now, to the Minorities. Yes, it is still High Street at that point, contrary to popular opinion. I didn’t know Adrian, but I certainly knew his cousin, Jenny. She and I used to catch the same bus to school each day. From the age of 5, we travelled from the stop that was by the Minorities garden wall, brick, very tall and topped with broken bottles. The stop would be where the traffic island is in the middle of the entrance to Lewis Gardens. I went to Hamilton Road School but Jenny’s school was a bus stop further on. It seems extraordinary to think of two unaccompanied 5 year olds doing that journey but we did. We are still good friends. She is a Civic Society member, I am pleased to say.

I can remember going to the post office at Robinson’s, the chemists where Adrian’s father worked (at the time, I had no idea that he lived above it) but we usually went to Weddell’s for our medicines etc. as it was closer. Weddell’s was staffed by three men, Mr White, Mr Kemp and one other, whose name escapes me. All were charming. Weddell’s certainly suffered smoke damage, as did Farmer’s, following the huge fire that started at Kent Blaxill’s, next door, in 1952. I can remember seeing the massive plume of black smoke from the churchyard at Birch. My mother had cycled there with me in my wicker child’s seat (made by the basket maker on North Hill) on the back and her garden shears in her bicycle basket on the front. We had gone to cut the grass on my grandfather’s grave. Intrigued by the smoke, Mum decided to abandon the idea of a walk through the meadows behind the churchyard and we returned to Colchester and a scene of utter chaos very close to home. The house smelt awful for some time afterwards.

There were three Kent Blaxill shops in High Street. It was the main shop that burnt down and had to be rebuilt but there was another almost opposite where The Three Wise Monkeys is now and a third at the top of High St close to Boots, which was on the corner of Head St and High



St, another chemists! My sister, 7 years younger than me, loved the Kent Blaxill at the top of High Street as it sold small toys as well as artist's materials. Not for her the joys of Sands as it had downsized and moved to Bank Passage, where it remains to this day as a much loved shop for luggage, handbags etc. However, in my childhood, it was in High Street. It sold luggage and bags, stationery wallets, dressing table sets, costume jewellery etc. downstairs but upstairs it boasted the best toy shop in town. Oh, how I loved Sands! We would sometimes meet my grandmother for coffee at Neal and Robarts or, occasionally, Jacklins, and she would then take me to Sands to buy me another lead animal for my toy farmyard. I still have a pig and a sheep. The rest were sold when we cleared my childhood home but I couldn't bear to let them all go!

Neal and Robarts became Purdys, much loved as a meeting place for Grammar, High School and Gilberd students in the 1960s and 70s. It is now Burger King. Neal and Robarts was on three levels. There was a coffee bar in the cellar and a cake shop on the ground floor. Upstairs there was a tea room. The cakes were gorgeous. My favourite was the chocolate bun filled with crème patisserie covered with crisp chocolate and topped with a walnut. I can taste it now. Yum! Jacklins, over the road, also served wonderful homemade cakes but they also sold Kunzel cakes. Remember them? I loved them. Thinking back, I dread to think what they contained but whatever it was, it tasted delicious. Jacklins also served tea cakes drenched with butter which came on a silver dish covered with a matching dome.

Of course, High Street had loads of food shops, Home and Colonial, International Stores, Liptons and Sainsbury's all sold groceries and so did Oliver Parker's overlooking High Street at the junction of High Street, Head Street and North Hill. Forsdike and Bonner's was just around the corner in Head Street. Sainsbury's was a beautiful shop, described to perfection by Adrian. Adrian mentions Travis, which sold cold meats and legendary pork pies and Hearsom's fish shop next to it. Hearsom's had other branches, including one in Crouch Street opposite the Odeon (the decorative fish design is still there above the door although the shop is long gone). I used to be sent to Hearsom's to buy 'half a pound of rock salmon' (it still trips off the tongue) for our cat, Joseph, who would only eat rock salmon or rabbit. We inherited him from our neighbour who went into care in Wimbledon when I was about 5. She had been a nanny to the children of a very aristocratic family who only had the best food. She treated the cat in the same way. We tried Kitekat. No chance!!

The High Street of my childhood had a saddlers, Claridges, which was close to Robinson's. It also had two seed merchants, Cramphorn's, almost opposite the Town Hall and Matthew's, near the George. The shop window of William's, later to amalgamate with Griffin's and Baker's, to become W&G, had tractors on display. Ratcliffe's, now out at Maypole Green, sold



guns and fishing equipment. It really was a market town serving an agricultural hinterland. Joslins, a glorious rabbit warren of a shop on the corner of Maidenburgh Street, also sold agricultural and horticultural bits and pieces alongside furniture and electrical goods. We bought my grandmother a television from Joslin's so that she - and we - could watch the Coronation.

There were clothes shops a plenty. Burton's and Hepworth's both sold off the peg and tailor made suits or one could go to Oliver Roger's, the little tailors just off High Street in Pelham's Lane. His daughter, also Jenny, was my best friend. For women there was Mayfair, near the George and Joy's. School uniforms came from Ernest Newson, Owen Ward or even Marks and Spencer's. We mustn't forget Kendall's, the umbrella shop, just to the west of Red Lion Yard.



No High Street then could be without Woolworths. The Woolworth's of my childhood, destroyed by fire in the early 1970s, was the standard wooden floored shop of the time, with counters piled high with every conceivable thing that could appeal to a small child. I particularly remember the glass marbles that appeared during marble season at school. They were contained by huge open topped glass display boxes on the wooden counter, glistening under the lights. Alleys, large marbles worth four one-ers, were on one side and the little halfers on the other side of a massive container of one-ers. The one-ers were usually fairly standard but the halfers and alleys were often far more unusual and immensely desirable! I still love marbles. My great joy was the Christmas window at Woolworth's, one year filled with walkie talkie dolls. Each doll had plaits and a cotton dress with a tiny floral design between stripes of yellow, blue, pink or mauve. I longed for one of those dolls and I still remember the joy of receiving Goldilocks on Christmas morning. I still have her, and her blue striped dress. She must be about 68 years old now.



High Street had stationers, W H Smiths and the wonderful Cullingford's, where I remember buying my first fountain pen, a Conway Stewart, for school. I was so proud of it. I still miss that shop. I have always loved stationers, the pads of pristine paper just waiting to be used, the coloured pencils in gloriously vibrant hues, the trays of pens with shining gold nibs (except for the Platignum ones which generally had steel ones. I never got on with those!) I'm sure that love stems from visits to Cullingfords.

It is difficult to imagine flocks of sheep and herds of cattle in High Street but I clearly remember them being driven up East Hill and past my home on their way to market, controlled by one man, a couple of dogs and, perhaps, a boy, and, sadly, being driven back down High Street and Queen Street to the slaughterhouse behind Allen's, the recently closed butchers, in St Botolph's Street. Like Adrian, I, too, remember Judy, the piebald pony, who pulled the Drury Farm Dairy's milk float.

Our milk was delivered by the Co-Op. I can still recall our divi number, 7124. My aunt's, which I inherited, was 198. We had bread delivered too, and our groceries were ordered at Oliver Parker's and delivered later in the day. Our sheets and tablecloths were collected by the man from Albany Laundry on a Monday afternoon and the previous week's laundry was returned at the same time,

neatly wrapped in brown paper tied with string. Both paper and string were kept to be reused. Our coal was delivered by Mr Merry, who lived in Irvine Road and who worked out of an office in Church Street. Newspapers were delivered by the newsagent Adrian mentions in his Letter, whose shop was below his grandparents' home. It is still a newsagents. Our neighbour was a Director of Quilter's Mineral Waters and we had a regular delivery of fizzy drinks, most luridly coloured. I wasn't a fan of the fizz or the excessive, cloying, sweetness but my sister loved them. Looking back, so much was delivered but it was all from local shops.

Returning to the buses, there were three stops travelling eastwards, the Fire Office, High Street (outside Mann's and the Holly Trees. and two going westwards, The Minorities and High Street (outside what is now Superdrug). Later, a new stop appeared outside St Nicholas House. I discovered that, coming home from Hamilton Road, I could save a halfpenny by getting off the bus at High Street. I would then run as fast as I could in the hope of getting to the Holly Trees stop opposite my home at the same time as the bus so that my mother didn't know! I had to remember to put my ticket into the little bin for used tickets as I alighted so that Mum didn't see that I had a white penny ticket rather than an orange one for a penny halfpenny. I, too, remember the bus passengers on the top deck looking into the house. My bedroom was at the front and we really did need net curtains!!



Many of the Grey Green long distance coaches left from a stop near the Hippodrome, close to the taxi rank. As Adrian says, the taxis parked beside a large traffic island in the middle of the road, on the site of St Runwald's Church. Beneath this traffic island were Gentlemen's toilets in what had been the church crypt. The Salvation Army Band used to march from their Citadel in St John's Avenue, off St John's Street, to a point at the end of the traffic island on a Sunday evening and hold a service there.

It is extraordinary to think that our childhood, the traffic was two way and, on Saturdays, the market stretched almost the whole length of High Street. It was almost impossible to walk on the south side of the street on a Saturday as it was absolutely crammed with shoppers. I particularly loved winter afternoons when the stall holders lit hurricane lamps so that they could see what they were doing. The roar of lamps and the smell of the paraffin was sensory overload for a small child.

Adrian is quite right. The High Street was fairly quiet at night during the 1950s. The soldiers from the barracks tended to use the pubs in Mersea Road, Osborne Street, St John's Street, Butt Road and, of course, those on St Botolph's Corner. Apart from the odd fish and chip shops, there were no takeaway food outlets and very few restaurants that were open at night. Dining out in High Street was restricted to the Cups, the Red Lion and the George. It was a very different world.

Thank you, Adrian, for the memories. What a pity we both thought that we were the only child living in High Street. We were the same age, too!



Jo Edwards

NEW BOOK – 50 TREASURES OF ESSEX

The Arts Societies of Essex have banded together to produce a book highlighting 50 Treasures of Essex.

As well as some obvious ones like Layer Marney Tower and Queen Elizabeth’s Hunting Lodge in Epping there is also the unexpected like Colchester Arts Centre Toilets and Langton’s Bath House in Hornchurch.

The book, which also makes an ideal gift, is on sale for £5 if you can collect it from Julia Stephen the Chairman of the Arts Society Colchester who lives in Old Heath or it can be posted to you for £6. Please contact Julia by telephone on 01206 864277 or email her juliaphavis@hotmail.co.uk if you are interested in purchasing a copy or two.

Julia Stephen

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LAMPOSTS

Volunteers have stripped and repainted twenty one cast iron lampposts during 2022. These are in Studd Lane, Beverley Road, Victoria Road, Queens Road and the Avenue (where work is still ongoing, with one more to strip and one to be top-coated). At present we have volunteers who we hope to see work start next year in Hamilton Road and Errington Road, Gladstone Road and possibly Salisbury Avenue (they have had a pack with paint and equipment for two years now, but have yet to get started) plus one lamppost near the Mercury Theatre and two in the Castle Park Folley. This means in all approximately sixty cast iron lampposts have been stripped and repainted. So we have completed around 20% of the total in three years.

John Salmon

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THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE OLD MILITARY HOSPITAL

Several years ago, a package containing old photographs, family history and valuable historical documents, mainly relating to the building of Oxford Street, London were discovered hidden in the attic of a Portsmouth house. It transpired that some of the documents had my maiden name on them, and, as a result, this package eventually found its way to me in Colchester.

Unfortunately the connection to me was very tenuous. However, I felt it was important to try to find the rightful owner. After months of research, I found a lady called Priscilla living in Buffalo, USA. I was very lucky that I had found her, but what happened next was even more extraordinary.

I discovered that Priscilla had a father-in-law who had been an Army officer here in Colchester. She went on to tell me her husband, Gerald, was born in Colchester. I couldn’t believe it. I realised that Gerald could have been born in the Military Hospital right on our doorstep. My husband, Tony, and I, knew the hospital had been somewhere close to where we were living on the Taylor Wimpey Churchill Gate development, but we didn’t know where. Everyone we asked couldn’t remember the exact spot where the demolished hospital had stood and now the new houses were built, all traces were gone. The only clues were the remaining established trees. Our hunt was on! The first port of call was Colchester Library where we delved into the maps in the reference area. Armed with our photocopies we returned home.

Over the years different Ordnance Survey maps showed variations of the hospital site and the size of the huge building.

These fascinating maps had one thing in common, they showed a large building which was the former Garrison Gymnasium! Incidentally, on some maps, it shows what appears to be a large puddle beside the Gym. This was marked as the 'Bathing Pool'. Later a purpose built swimming pool was built at the Ypres Road end of the Gym; this swimming pool has now been demolished. We decided there was only one thing to do, we found our long measuring reel and set off to measure the Gym!

Once done, Tony worked out the scale on the map in relation to the actual size of the Gymnasium. This gave us the distance we would need to measure from Ypres Road along Circular Road South. I did feel rather foolish as we walked quite some distance along the road. I plodded along in front pulling the tape, with Tony behind shouting commands for me to stop once the tape reached certain points. On the final command I stopped at a gap in the hedge and looked. I had always wondered why this gap hadn't been planted up. I was soon to find out the reason!

Tony soon joined me, saying we were there! We looked towards the south over the roof tops of the houses and the gardens. It became apparent we were looking at the original entrance to the hospital. We could see the large remaining trees in the gardens. These trees had once lined the road up to the hospital front door entrance.

We then had to ascertain exactly where the front of the Military Hospital had been. We couldn't climb over fences and through gardens so we did the next best thing. We began measuring from Circular Road South, walking up the incline of Baynard Green until we reached Abbey Field View.

Once on Abbey Field View we could see the top end of the line of the trees where the original road came through. With our measurements we were able to deduce where the original Military Hospital walls would have been. As it transpired they were only a few metres behind the houses built along Abbey Field View.



Now we had found the hospital location we decided it should be commemorated with a plaque. There was also another area on the same site which needed to be remembered and that was the Sobraon Barracks.



After a lot more research, and even more calculations by Tony, he was able to reproduce the location details of the hospital and the barracks by overlaying them onto the developers' site plan.

Having been put in touch with the developers, Taylor Wimpey, they agreed to fund these important plaques! In early 2012 we had a grand unveiling for both plaques,

one erected at No. 13, Abbey Field View, which was close to the front of the hospital and the other one at No. 41 where one of the Sobraon Barrack blocks once stood.

The unveiling over, we returned to our house for the reception. Later we introduced everyone - via Skype - to our new friend, Priscilla, in Buffalo.

And as for the discarded attic papers, if they hadn't come into my possession we would never have erected the two important blue plaques. As it turned out those attic papers hadn't quite finished with me and they led me on a further incredible journey of discovery - but that's another story!

Rosemary Jewers

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CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

I was so pleased to receive an invitation to Stanway Green Care Home's garden party to celebrate the astonishing achievement of one of the residents, Cindy Grimwood. Many if you will have come across Cindy's incredible Facebook group, Old Colchester and District in Pictures. If you haven't, it really is worth biting the bullet and joining Facebook just to become a member. The site has thousands of pictures of Colchester dating from the earliest days of photography. It provides far more than an extraordinary opportunity to wallow in nostalgia. It is an incredible resource, too, used by planners, architects, teachers, historians, journalists - and by us! Cindy was the first person to receive a Colchester Civic Society Certificate of Appreciation. I cannot think of anyone more deserving!

Jo Edwards

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HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2022

On what was a sad week end (her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had just died), Heritage Open Days started in Colchester.

Colchester Civic Society steward the Roman Theatre in Maidenburgh Street and the Audley Chapel at Berechurch. Visitor numbers seem to be on a par with previous years which was good to see even though at 2pm on Sunday 11 September, many people were in the High Street to hear the proclamation of King Charles III. A heritage event in itself.



I want to thank all those who gave up their time to act as stewards and spread the word of the Society. In particular, thanks to Jo Edwards and Julie Abbey who stood in at the last minute on Sunday at the Roman Theatre when those that were down to be there were unable to attend. There were visitors from USA who came to see the Theatre.

For the tours that I led, Siege of Colchester, Roman Colchester and Gosbecks the numbers attending were about the same as previous years. I had one couple from Brighton and two from China. Otherwise the people were all local.

I do struggle to find stewards so if you have not done it before please think of coming forward in 2023. You will not be on your own as I always have two people in each venue. You do not need to know anything about the property but if you are thinking of stewarding and would like further information to help you, please get in touch.

Ann Turner

Postscript - A few weeks ago, BBC Essex got in touch with Jo asking about a tour of Colchester for Children in Need. She passed the details to me and as a result, I persuaded my colleagues, Claire Partner and Ian Baalham, to do the tour with me as a back marker. I had to fill in at several points so I may have ended up on BBC Essex.

We did the tour at 12 mid day on 12th November and had 75 people on the tour. Most were locals who commented that they did not know anything about the town. The Mayor and Bob Russell were also there. I don't know how much they collected on the day but it will all go towards Children in Need.

I attach a photo of Claire and Ian with Pudsey. He did not go on the tour and with such big feet I can understand why he did not.



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Heritage Open Days – more sites



This year, the Heritage Open Days included access to several Colchester churches, including the former Camp Church, now St John's Orthodox Church and St Leonards-at-the-Hythe (see article below) but also some just outside the town, at West Bergholt and Wivenhoe. I always mean to visit Wivenhoe, so decided to visit St Mary's Church and have a look around again. I did catch sight of the Blue Plaque for the actress Joan Hickson, whose television performances as Miss Marple were being broadcast again.

I was made very welcome at the Church, which includes Roman bricks in its construction and has been added to at various times. The most recent addition is very recent indeed and includes a stained glass window designed by the local artist, James Dodds, who arrived in person to talk about the project. The boat depicted is a Christian symbol.

Peter Evans

The Angels of St Leonard-at-the-Hythe

The church of St Leonard-at-the-Hythe stands rather remote from the city centre and could be said to look rather sad and neglected. However, in its time was one of the most splendid of Colchester's medieval churches. Having been declared redundant by the Church of England in 1984, it was taken over by the Churches Conservation Trust and is now kept open as much as possible by volunteers.

The Church holds many secrets and also evidence of the history of Colchester and the Hythe area in particular. From the prosperous maritime days of the port of New Hythe, the weeks of the siege of Colchester during the English civil war to the Victorian Anglo-Catholic revival in the Church of England, you will find it all and more at St Leonard's. There are stories of the infamous Kitty Canham of Thorpe le Soken, whose body was stored in the church before being identified, to men being arrested for using the nave for sail making. However one of the stories that has led to speculation and local legends is that of the Angels of St Leonard's.

Before the reformation there were 12 wooden, carved angels attached to the hammerbeam roof of the nave. They would have looked similar to the angels attached to the roof of Westminster hall in London

These beautiful carvings were taken down at some point. No one is completely sure when or why. William Wire, the Victorian Colchester historian, who was married to Mary Stevens in St Leonard's, says, in his *Journal of Colchester*, that they were removed by the ardently protestant congregation in the eighteenth century. Other sources say they were removed in the 1640s, again by the puritans. But it may have been that they were unsafe and removed for that reason.



The wooden angel in Westminster Hall

After removal they were placed in the parvise room for safe keeping. This room is situated above the south porch, the main entrance to the church. It has been used for many things over the years, including a treasury and at one period it was used as a parish jail. It is a timber framed room which has only one access point: inside the church about 8 feet up and no ladder!



Door to the parvise room

When the angels were removed and placed in the parvise room they were arranged in such a way that their heads could be seen out of the windows, onto the main road.

This gave rise to a celebrated Hythe legend.

Four thieves were caught attempting to steal the church plate. As a punishment they were locked up in the parvise room and left to starve to death. A local baker heard their cries for help and threw them a loaf of bread. For his act of compassion he, too, was locked away with them. It was believed that the angels' heads were in fact the shrivelled heads of the thieves and the baker.

The five angels are still safely in the parvise room although in the nineteenth century they were displayed in the tower of the church. When the church became redundant in 1984 it was obviously felt that they were safer in the parvise room as the church was no longer in frequent use.



The five carved angels in the parvise room

But what happened to the other seven?

Should the angels stay hidden away or is it time that they should be restored to some of their original glory?

Surely these medieval treasures should be displayed but they have been peacefully resting in their own little 'cell' for many years; should we disturb the Angels of St Leonard's?

Joy Hopkinson

Joy and her colleagues in The Friends of St Leonard's arrange for the Church to be open for visitors on Tuesday lunchtimes between 12.00 and 14.00 hours – or see the opportunity to visit the Church in the Social programme

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COMMUNITY ACTION DAYS

We all know of “grot spots” around Colchester that need a bit of basic TLC. The sort of small ‘housekeeping’ jobs that, done well in just a few hours, can make a huge difference to the look and feel of our city.

This is the concept that lies behind the Community Action Days (CADs), a Council initiative to bring together Council staff and the local community to improve a particular area.

Society members have joined in with all City centre CADs and continue to work in partnership with the City Centre Neighbourhood Team with both practical hands- on support and help but also in the background by suggesting areas of central Colchester that might benefit from the simple, focused TLC that a Community Action Day can bring.

Members also arrange quick and informal Civic Society - led rather than Council-led Action Days; two recent examples being to tackle weed growth and litter on both North Bridge and East Bridge and a further session litter picking and collecting fly-tipped rubbish on the east side of town. We're sure that we'll need to go back and repeat our efforts on both bridges in the Spring – the weeds just keep growing and the litter keeps being dropped.

There are no shortage of potential sites that would benefit from a bit of focused TLC and whether working in partnership with The Neighbourhood Team, or simply working as a group of Society members or as individuals we'll keep at it because we care about Colchester and want to do all we can to improve its appearance.

We call it “Civic Pride”.

Society CAD team

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EYES AND EARS

As well as Community Action Days our Eyes and Ears team continues to try and make a difference to the look and feel of Colchester by reporting issues to the relevant body that, if sorted, would improve the look and feel of our city: fly-tipping, graffiti, redundant or damaged street furniture, potholes, broken drain covers and so on. We don't always succeed but we do try and a significant number of matters are dealt with, and promptly. Heartfelt thanks to all council staff who support us.

More often than not the issue will be the responsibility of Colchester City Council or Essex Highways. Please support us by reporting issues on their websites, by email or by phone, and help make Colchester 'A City Worth Living in'.

Stop Press:

You will have read "Room with A View" that there is great interest in Telephone Boxes. Our latest public phone box survey was sent to B T. Here is the response:

'I have raised faults for these kiosks to be visited and repaired, this will take time with this amount of kiosks and also spare parts may have to be ordered so please allow a few weeks for all works to be completed. I will pass the two I could not raise faults against to the regional field officer to deal with.

If you have any further enquiries please don't hesitate in calling or emailing the payphone team who are always happy to help'.

Hopefully, there will be much improvement soon.

Sheila Anderton

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POPPIES

A total of 120 poppies of various designs, both knitted and crocheted, were handed over to the British Legion for volunteers to sell during the November poppy appeal. We will support the initiative again next year and would welcome any support from Society members.

Sheila Anderton

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AWARD OF CITY STATUS -23RD NOVEMBER 2022

At the ceremony in the Moot Hall the Lord Lieutenant, Jane Tolhurst, presented the Letters Patent to the Mayor Councillor Tim Young . In the ceremony, Sir Bob Russell read the following speech.

"The declaration that from this evening Colchester is a City, with Letters Patent issued in the name of Queen Elizabeth II but served in the reign of King Charles III, is a momentous occasion in the 2,000 years history of what today we know as Colchester but which at the time of the Roman invasion in AD:43 was Camulodunum, the principal settlement of the Ancient British Tribe, the Trinovantes, with the tribal capital probably at Gosbecks.

The Emperor Claudius had a triumphal arch built where Balkerne Gate was built later. He declared this to be his City of Victory, a Colonia, the highest form of a Roman City, and for several years from AD:49 it was the de facto capital of Roman Britain – Britain's First City, Britain's First Capital.

The second moment of historical significance of the magnitude to what we are celebrating tonight came in 917 when – as stated in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle – the Saxon King, Edward the Elder, granted the status of Burh, precursor to a borough. It indicated that we were a fortified town, which he had refortified and restored after driving out the Danish Vikings.

The third was during the 35-year reign of the Norman King, Henry II, when on an unknown date between 1154 and 1189 he made Colchester a Borough – giving Colchester the right of self-government.

Becoming a City in 2022 – restoring the city status granted 1,973 years ago – is a date in Colchester’s rich history to match the three previous ones I have mentioned.

The big difference, of course, is that we are living participants in this history-making day..... taking place in our magnificent Moot Hall, with the portrait of our late Queen looking down on us.

Mr Mayor – this building is not a museum, nor should it be. For Colcestrians, it symbolises civic pride. Our Town Hall, and it retains that historic name, represents the seat of Colchester’s local democracy – even though, sadly, successive national governments have diluted Colchester’s self-government from what it once was.

Less than three hours ago, the Sun set for the last time on Colchester as a Town, as a Borough. In little more than 12 hours, the Sun will rise on Colchester’s first day as a City in modern times.

It is an honour and a privilege, as the 23rd High Steward of Colchester, that I welcome City status for what now makes Colchester Britain’s Oldest Recorded City.”



MEMBERSHIP

George Housego

Many longstanding members of the Society will be saddened to hear of the death of George Housego. He worked for Kings Coaches and was our driver for many Civic Society excursions and holidays. He always brought Amy, his wife, with him. She would sit beside him with a map as we explored far off the beaten track. They enthusiastically joined us at each destination, thoroughly enjoying everything from ancient buildings to concerts (notably one at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester) and boat trips to factories. When George finally retired, he and Amy joined the Society. He remained a member until his death on 4th November at Great Horkesley Manor. He will be missed.

Jo Edwards

We Welcome the following new Members;

Julie Abbey, Mrs Glyn Barritt, Simon and Rebecca Collis, Andrew Dennison, John Lowley, Christopher McNulty, Charles Molle, Andrew Mowbray, Steven and Sarah Shaw, Alan and Sylvia Skinner.



STOP PRESS

Just before going to print, we heard that Elisabeth Baines, one of our Vice Presidents and a long serving officer of the society, has died. We send her husband Austin our sympathy and will print a tribute in the next edition of the newsletter.

ONE SQUARE MILE - HISTORY ON YOUR DOORSTEP

How pleased I was to hear that St John's Green School has won its bid for Heritage Lottery Funding for its One Square Mile Project.

The project will take place over the next two years and aims to research the rich heritage on the school's doorstep. Teachers will have the opportunity to work with an expert team of freelancers and supporters to increase their own skills and understanding and to identify and bring together, in one place, the sources, trails, images and knowledge to use within their professional practice now and in the future. These will be developed as a One-Place Study that will be available to teachers, their peers and the wider public.

The school have said that they 'are delighted to be working with Colchester Garrison, Colchester Civic Society, Colchester Recalled Oral History Society, Colchester Archaeological Trust, Colchester Museums Services and the Essex Record Office, who will bring a wealth of knowledge to the project, advising and signposting on their area of expertise.'

Each pupil year-group will research a dedicated time period, interpreting information for a resource.

Artist Nicola Burrell, a Civic Society member, will creatively support teachers and pupils in ways of looking, by truly observing the heritage in their locality through drawing and sketching, leading to creating incredible 3-dimensional cardboard sculptures.

The heritage sites and people who made the local community over time, will be mapped online on a dedicated interactive history map. This will be a unique digital platform, which maps and layers the heritage through the ages, illustrated by the children's interpretation and drawings. Each layer will be based around a year-group's creative investigation of local history areas and key periods.

2024 is a milestone in the school's history as it celebrates its 125th anniversary. For this special year, they will be researching the school's heritage using the incredible archive of log books and admission registers. They will work with Essex Record Office to digitise their archive, making it accessible to the wider public.

Our Vice President, Henry Spyvee, was at the school in the 1940s and is eager to be involved. I wonder, Henry, whether you are mentioned in those log books?! By chance, both our new Chair, Howard, and I have grandchildren at the school, too. What a wonderful opportunity for them!

If you would like to help in any way, please contact me as I am liaising with the school on behalf of the Civic Society. josiemedwards@hotmail.com or 07771626561
Jo Edwards

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Rosemary Jewers

Rosemary, the Society's blue plaque guru, creator of the Civic Society Plaque Trails and the first person to 'tweet' on behalf of the Society, has moved to Cambridgeshire to be nearer her family. How we will miss her! What a difference she made; so many new plaques, three Plaque Trails that are very well used by local people, tourists, schools etc and our highly successful Twitter presence that has introduced so many to the work of the Society and to Colchester itself. Thank you, Rosemary, for your boundless energy, your many brilliant ideas, your enthusiasm, your drive, your loyalty and your friendship. We wish you luck and happiness in your new home.



Jo Edwards

NEWS FROM CIVIC SOCIETY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Amongst the many items that have been discussed at the executive Committee is the Council's Master Plan, prepared to consider the future of the City. We have attended several meetings and responded by giving our views on two occasions. We are about to respond to a plan produced by Essex County Council and cycle lanes and proposed changes to traffic regulations.

Most recently we have had news of the anonymous post box that was removed from Mersea Road. Sir Bob Russell has been pursuing this issue and has been advised that it will be reinstalled in Lexden Road, to replace a damaged anonymous post box. He is awaiting details of the date.

In the past, the Society has had a Tree Officer, to keep an on issues involving trees throughout the City, Tree Preservation orders, commemorative trees etc. it would be helpful, but not essential, if the Tree Officer attended the Executive Committee. Full details are available from Jo Edwards if you are interested in the role

Peter Evans

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A RETURN TO OLD HAUNTS

On 6th December 2022, about 100 people gathered in Old Library to hear Robert Lloyd Parry's one man show of two Ghost Stories by M R James – A Warning For The Curious and the Lost Hearts. Not a fluff or a hesitation. There was only a lamp, whisky decanter and glass – and darkness and silence, just story telling. We were all in rapt attention for the entire production

The performance was in aid of the Mayor's Charities and the venue was supposed to be the Mayor's parlour, but had to be moved to the Old Library in West Stockwell Street. As the Mayoress said, it was probably a bonus. There was mulled wine and mince pies.

It certainly brought back old ghosts for me, as this room was where I had my first job, in the Borough Treasurer's Department over 50 years ago. Many of those attending were, as I had been, fascinated by the bas relief of the Great Exhibition 1851, which was presented by James Paxman and takes up one wall of room, just as I had been on my first day at the Old Library.

There are some more Ghost stories to be told in this room after Christmas, this time by the Packing Shed Theatre. At the time of writing, I have not been to hear them, but I feel strangely impelled to go.....

Peter Evans

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REPORTS OF SOCIAL EVENTS

Unveiling of two Military Plaques 26th August 2022

Paul Knappett, one of our members, has championed this project, has provided us with the following report which explains the full story behind the installation of the plaques.

Preserving the history of the Colchester Royal Artillery (Le Cateau) Barracks

Paul Knappett, who is managing the project which is an important attempt to preserve the history of the Royal Artillery (Le Cateau) Barracks in Colchester, had a long standing career with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) and the Army Base Repair Organisation (ABRO) whilst based at Le Cateau Barracks, interestingly these were first known as the Royal

Artillery Barracks. The barracks are one of the earliest examples of a permanent barracks in the Victorian Colchester Garrison and therefore of definite historical importance. Furthermore and during his time at the barracks he developed affection for their design and history.

During the renovation of the Sergeants' Mess building, originally the Officers' Quarters of the Royal Artillery Barracks, he spent time with the developer, Michael Tomkins (Sergeants' Mess Ltd) researching the architecture and history of the building and the whole barracks generally. From this research they both felt it was important for historic Colchester, that a permanent monument should be erected to commemorate the history of the building, the barracks, the setting (including the Circus Starting Gates which are in close proximity) and the Battle of Le Cateau. It should be noted that at the end of the Great War and in commemoration of the action by the Royal Field Artillery during the Battle of Le Cateau, the barracks were renamed "Le Cateau Barracks".

To achieve this ambition, a small team evolved during the last eighteen months and this included Paul, members of the Colchester Civic Society, Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) and residents of the Sergeants' Mess building. Although not attending as a member of the team, his friend, Ian Bates, helped with much of the back ground work.

The team felt it was important to ensure the aforementioned history was communicated in two stages and in such a way the public could easily understand it. With this in mind it was agreed that the first stage would be to establish two blue plaques on the Sergeants' Mess building, these would commemorate the parts of the history which related to the Officers' Quarters and an officer (Major Raymond England) who lived there and along with a number of men of the Royal Field Artillery lost his life during the Battle of Le Cateau. The second stage would be to establish a permanent monument to commemorate the architecture of the Royal Artillery Barracks, the history of the barracks, the Battle of Le Cateau and the Roman Circus Ancient Monument.



The first stage in this process was achieved on Friday 26th August 2022, this being the anniversary of the Battle of Le Cateau, 26th August 1914. The two blue plaques, one mounted at each end of the Sergeants' Mess building, were unveiled by the Colchester Garrison Commander, Lt Col Ed Rankin.

The unveiling ceremony of the plaques was attended by Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Essex, the Mayor and Mayoress, the High Sheriff of Essex, the High Steward of Colchester and around seventy five other invited guests,

these included the family of Major Raymond. The occasion took place in the beautiful settings of the Sergeants' Mess building and the Roman Circus Visitor Centre. The weather could not have been better making the day a memorable occasion for all who attended.

Forming part of what was an educational process and for the guests to enjoy whilst having their refreshments efficiently supplied by the Roman Circus Cafe team historic photographs of the original Royal Artillery Barracks, the Battle of Le Cateau and Major Raymond England, were all on display. There was also a large reproduction of a 1909 map of the original Royal Artillery Barracks showing all the buildings and explaining their use.



To provide an understanding of how the proposed permanent monument would communicate the information, and in particular the top, a 3D image was displayed. Guests could see from the image how, by virtue of a tactile (sensory) and scale model, the Royal Artillery Barracks originally built in 1875, would have been laid out. It also showed the location of the Roman Circus Starting Gates discovered in the front garden (actually a lawn tennis court) of the original Officers' Quarters in 2004.

The tactile model will be constructed from a bronze composite material and have cast into its base an interpretation panel, additionally; there would also be the major points in Braille. This will provide detailed information about the history of the Royal Artillery Barracks, the Battle of Le Cateau and the Roman Circus Ancient Monument.

A frieze in relief will go around the perimeter of the tactile model above a York stone mount, this will depict mounted WW1 soldiers pulling their 18 Pounder Field Guns and Limbers leaving for, and returning exhausted from the war, a poignant story.

This tactile model of the barracks and the frieze in relief will communicate historic information to the public in a novel and simplistic manner, a first of its type for Colchester.

The detailed architecture which identifies all the original Royal Artillery Barracks buildings is to be replicated in a brick pier which will support the York stone mount that houses the tactile model and frieze in relief.

First Blue Plaque unveiled



This plaque commemorates the listed building constructed in 1874-75 as the Officers' Quarters of the Royal Artillery Barracks. In more recent times the building has been known as the Garrison Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess and now thoughtfully converted into eight luxury homes with the name "Sergeants' Mess Building".

The detailed architecture of the Officers' Quarters makes it arguably the most prominent building in one of the earliest and best persevered permanent barracks of the Victorian Colchester Garrison. It is also the last barracks in the United Kingdom to have been constructed around

what was the traditional Military Camp Plan. As such the surviving Grade 2 Listed buildings are the only known examples of what was then a new layout of barracks, developed at Aldershot in the 1850s, for large-scale training camps. Collectively these Grade 2 Listed buildings are of historical and national importance.

Additionally, as a matter of interest, in what was the Officers' front garden (lawn tennis court) that the remains of the Colchester Roman Circus Starting Gates were discovered in 2004.

Second Blue Plaque unveiled

The plaque is in remembrance of Major Raymond England, Battery Commander 88th Battery, 14th Brigade and the men of the Royal Field Artillery, who lost their lives at the Battle of Le Cateau on 26th August 1914. The battle will always be remembered for the bravery of the men who fought in it, five V Cs were awarded, three of which were to 37th Battery Royal Field Artillery which was the last mounted artillery battery to be stationed at Le Cateau Barracks in 1937. This was a result of mechanisation within the Royal Artillery when vehicles replaced horses. (This led to the establishment of a large engineering workshop



on the site which became the REME workshop and its later years ABRO Colchester providing engineering support to military units based in the east of England).

There were two name changes of the barracks during its lifetime, both of which reflect important events in military and British history. As a result of a major reorganisation of the army in 1899 the Royal Artillery Barracks became the Royal Field Artillery Barracks, and following the Great War the barracks were renamed, Le Cateau Barracks, this being to commemorate the actions of the Royal Field Artillery in the Battle of Le Cateau.

The blue plaques will now be added to the Colchester's Civic Society Military and Wartime Blue Plaque Trail for the public to follow and increase their understanding of Colchester's multi-layered military history.

The Royal Artillery Barracks Commemorative Monument



The next step in the process was to establish planning consent for the Royal Artillery Barracks Commemorative Monument on a piece of land at the south east entrance to the Sergeants' Mess building, formerly the Officers' Quarters.

Conditional Planning Consent was granted by Colchester Borough Council with a condition applied in that the Scheduled Monument Consent had to be obtained through Historic England from the Secretary of State for Culture, Digital, Media and Sport. A Scheduled Monument Consent application was submitted on the 08/08/2022.

Historic England notified the applicant, Sergeants' Mess Limited on the 09/09/2022, that Scheduled Monument Consent to erect the Royal Artillery Barracks Commemorative Monument had been granted by the Secretary of State.

Michael Tomkins (Sergeants' Mess Ltd) immediately took action to transfer ownership of the parcel of land where the monument will be erected, free of all costs, to CAT who will be the custodian of the monument. Philip Crummy Director of CAT will prepare a written statement of investigation including a method statement so investigative work can commence for the foundations. When Historic England, Colchester Borough Council and a structural engineer are satisfied with the proposed design for the foundation, construction of the monument can start. This will be the green light for fund raising to commence. The Royal Artillery Association has indicated that it will contribute towards the cost of delivering the monument but want to know what other sponsors are pledging their support and the amount of funding required. A commitment from Colchester Borough Council to support the project as part of the large scale housing development planned for the redundant Le Cateau Barracks site would send a powerful message that it values Colchester's military history.

Most visitors to the Roman Circus Visitor Centre and the redeveloped area where the part of the Royal Artillery Barracks once stood have no idea what the surviving Grade 2 Listed buildings represent in military historic terms.

If the Royal Artillery Barracks Commemorative Monument is not established there is an increasing risk, especially with the development of the Ex-ABRO site that this part of Colchester's military history will be lost to the public now and for those that follow in the future.

It is felt that failure to establish a monument would be especially disappointing for those visiting

the Roman Circus Visitor Centre. The proposed monument offers a unique way to rectify this and also to enhance the attraction of the Centre and the Circus itself.

The team sincerely hopes that the monument will be supported by Colchester Borough Council, the military together with other organisations/individuals who want to preserve Colchester's military history.

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Visit to Colchester Arts Centre 1st October 2022

On 1 October a group of CCS members visited the refurbished Arts Centre, in the former church of St Mary at the Walls. Director Anthony Roberts gave them an entertaining tour of the building, which reopened in May of this year after major refurbishment during the Covid pandemic.



Mr Roberts had been Director of the Arts Centre Director since 1991 and clearly had a great attachment to the building and its eventful history. He began the tour by taking the group through its development. He said that the existence of the church was first clearly attested in 1206, though other evidence suggests it was probably

much older. The only surviving portion of the mediaeval building was the tower. The lower part of this was of the later thirteenth century, while the upper section had been rebuilt in the 1530s. During the 1648 siege, the church was destroyed by artillery fire from the direction of St John's Abbey, as the tower had been used by the Royalist garrison as an observation post and gun platform (it is the highest point in the old town). Mr Roberts recounted the local legend linking it to the Humpty-Dumpty children's rhyme, while reluctantly admitting there was no truth to it. The tower, though battered, survived the bombardment, but the body of the building was irreparably ruined. It remained so for half a century until it was replaced in 1713-14 in contemporary style using money left by Sir Isaac Rebow. The tower was retained and patched up.

The eighteenth-century building was replaced again in 1872-2, to a design by Sir A W Blomfield. Initially, Blomfield had been asked to design only a new chancel to add to the existing church, but money became available to completely rebuild it, and that is what was done. Utilising polychrome brickwork and iron pillars for the nave arcade, his bold Victorian gothic design is substantially the building that remains today. The new church was larger than the old, with a seating capacity of about 500. Remains of a Roman building were uncovered on the site of the new chancel.



Anthony Roberts, Art Centre Manager, centre, with part of the group

St Mary's suffered some damage during the 1884 earthquake, with stonework on the tower needing to be replaced. During the repair work the tower was heightened slightly. The church underwent further modifications in the early twentieth century, with the iron internal pillars being encased in new terracotta columns with attractive moulded capitals. In 1922 an apse was added to the south chapel, which was refitted as a war memorial, with a rood being added in 1931.

After the church closed for regular worship in 1978, St Marys was deconsecrated and converted to its present use. The new Arts Centre opened in 1980. My own first view of the interior was many years ago on one of the occasions when it hosted the Colchester Winter Ale Festival, a CAMRA event which happily continues (the next one will be between 25-28 January 2023). At that time – probably in the 1990s - the interior had a somewhat dingy and makeshift quality, but the refurbishment has certainly changed that.

Anthony Roberts took the group around the building, showing what had changed and what had been retained. The opportunity had been taken to restore some features of the church. As well as comprehensive redecoration, the work included the upgrading of facilities for performers and visitors. He had worked with Architects Inkpen Downie to ensure that the fabric was respected as far as possible, and the past use of the building not obscured. He was also concerned that the work should be finished to a high standard, and Artist Anne Schwegmann-Fielding had helped with the decoration of the rather spectacular new toilet facilities, which were embellished with her tile mosaics.

After showing the group the “behind the scenes” areas at the east end, which are now used for storage, administration, and artists’ dressing areas, Mr Roberts pointed out the Rebow monument and took some of the more intrepid spirits to the top of the tower, with its fine views over the town in all directions.



Mr Roberts contrasted what he felt was the sensitive reuse of St Mary’s for a secular purpose, with the rather brutal treatment Blomfield’s other Colchester church, St John the Evangelist, had received from the Church of England.

My curiosity whetted, I visited St John the Evangelist, on Ipswich Road, a few days later, as it is quite near where I live. A new foundation, it was built in 1864, a few years before St Mary’s. The two buildings had some similarities, but St John’s was simpler and more rustic. It was in the Decorated style, of red brick with yellow and blue bands and stone window tracery. A rather small building, it

consisted of a chancel and nave surmounted by a small bellcote at the west end. However, in recent decades it had been massively extended and completely reordered internally, though much of the shell and some original internal elements had been preserved. The new extensions match the original building well in materials if not in style, and the general effect from some angles is rather like a small supermarket or public library.

Of course, this brings some of the questions



about conservation into rather sharp focus. What is to be done with a building which is surplus to requirements in its original role? Or one which is still wanted but is now felt to be too small or otherwise unsuitable?

I think most members of the CCS group were very favourably impressed by the refurbishment of the Arts Centre. However, when I posted my photographs of both churches on social media, they aroused a good deal of interest - and some sharply conflicting opinions. It was a sad reminder that change carries costs as well as benefits, and where buildings are the focus of long-established communities, their loss or transformation can be painful.

Richard Arnopp

Link to photos of the Arts Centre –

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=richard.j.arnopp&set=a.10161945895841521>

Link to photos of St John’s –

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?vanity=richard.j.arnopp&set=a.10161949927806521>



PS One of the mosaics features a picture of Nick Alexander, a Weeley lad and Arts Centre regular who was killed in 2015 at the Bataclan terrorist attack in Paris. It just shows the thought that went into this project.

Peter Evans

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STOP PRESS

Colchester Arts Centre scoops award at **Loo of the Year**

The facilities scooped the **quirky toilet design of the year award**.

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21st October 2022 the Grave of Jesse Jones, Waterloo Veteran, Restored in St Botolph's Priory

On Friday 21st October a service took place in St. Botolph's Churchyard to unveil the restored grave of Captain Jesse Jones who fought with the First Foot Guards at the Battle of Waterloo. He also served with the East Essex Militia and was awarded the Peninsular Medal with the Barossa Bar as well as the Waterloo Medal. The First Foot Guards was rebadged as the Grenadier Guards following the battle.



The restoration of the grave took around three years to complete and proved quite a challenge having to meet the requirements of the Colchester Diocese, and Borough Council as well as English Heritage. The grave has now been repaired and cleaned and a small plaque added giving details of the almost illegible inscription.

The proceedings commenced with an introduction

by Robert Mercer of the Colchester Civic Society followed by a service conducted by the Bishop of Colchester, the Right Reverend Robert Morris. After the opening prayers members of the Grenadier Guards Regimental Association unveiled the gravestone. Lieutenant Colonel Ed Rankin, Commander of Colchester Garrison, paid a tribute to Captain Jones giving details of his life and military service as well as a brief history of the regiments he served with.



The Act of Remembrance, a two-minute silence and the Kohima Epitaph was followed by Lieutenant Colonel James Keeley, General Secretary of the Regimental Association laying a wreath. The service then concluded with prayers and a blessing.

Peter Jones (Not knowingly related)



SOCIAL PROGRAMME

Herewith the Programme for the first part of the year. It is, unfortunately, not complete as I still have some events in the pipeline and I suspect that more members briefings from the Council will materialise as the Town Deal projects start. Please ensure that you tell us if you change your email address or even acquire one. We can then update you very easily.

One of the events will hopefully be the formal unveiling of a plaque to Catherine Marsh, to be erected as part of the Lord Lieutenant of Essex's Queen's Jubilee project to recognise 100 influential women in the County. The application to erect this plaque on the front of the Co-Op Bank in High Street is still being considered by the Council's Planning Department but we understand permission is likely to be granted. I don't want to jinx anything by asking you to let us know if you would like to see the plaque unveiled but if you check the event application slips enclosed, you might find one that could be useful!

We were offered a visit to Jumbo on 13th January at quite short notice. Places were limited and so we contacted those members with an email address and a few others until we reached the limit. If you would like to go and you didn't get the opportunity, please complete the reply slip and return it asap as I have asked for some more places when they become available. The tour lasts approximately 45 minutes and access is via a metal spiral staircase with 157 steps so a reasonable level of fitness is required. Unfortunately, there is no disabled access. Participants should wear sensible footwear with no high heels, and gloves are also recommended due to a rope climbing aid.

URGENT If you were one of the members who took part in the visit to Jumbo on 13th January, our hosts would really appreciate it if you would complete a short online survey organised by North Essex Heritage for Jumbo Water Tower.

North Essex Heritage is hoping to demonstrate the need and demand for the project for future funders. It only takes a minute to complete. Please also pass onto your friends and family.

2000 people have returned the survey so far - let's try to make it 3,000!

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Jumbo-Water-Tower/>

I apologise for the absence of coach trips in 2023. The cost of coaches is astronomical at the moment and that, combined with the general cost of living crisis and members' ongoing fear of contracting Covid or flu, makes arranging trips a risky business as I doubt I could fill a coach. Hopefully, next year, things will change for the better.

You will notice that most of our events this year have no set price but we say that donations would be welcomed. We are the guests of several charitable organisations this year who are doing amazing work in Colchester. They have told us that they don't want to charge us a set amount but if we can make a donation, they would be really grateful. I never feel comfortable telling people how much they should donate so I am leaving the decision to you! It would be very helpful if you could make the payment to us at the time of booking, though, please, so that we can hand over a lump sum. Apart from anything else, it means that whoever is leading the group doesn't have to collect money on the day!

We do not charge for Civic Society Coffee Mornings as we value your presence so much. Greyfriars don't charge us for the use of a room, for which we are extremely grateful, but we do have to pay for drinks and they have gone up in price! Donations are therefore very much appreciated.

Tuesday 7th February 2023 Meet at 10am in the Cloisters at Greyfriars Hotel, High Street, for our February Coffee Morning Discussion

Held on the first Tuesday of every month, our Coffee Mornings provide a forum where members raise and discuss any issues affecting Colchester, however large or small.

Car parking is available in the hotel car park (entrance opposite the Forester's Arms, follow road round to the right and, if the gates are shut, press the intercom button on the post to your right.

Cost? Free but donations to Civic Society funds welcomed.

Tuesday 7th March 2023 Meet at 10am at Greyfriars for our March Coffee Morning Discussion

Cost? Free but donations welcomed

Thursday 23rd March 2023 Meet outside Greyfriars Hotel (front door) at 10am for the first of our two Keep Britain Tidy Great British Spring Clean litter picking sessions for 2023.

Litter pickers, collection sacks and latex gloves will be provided. Refreshments afterwards at GreyFriars

Tuesday 28th March 2023 Meet outside Greyfriars Hotel, at 10am for the second of our two Great British Spring Clean litter picking sessions for 2023

See above for details.

Saturday 1st April 2023 Meet at the St Botolph's Street end of Priory Street Car Park at 2pm for a guided walk via the Priory to New Town led by our President, John Burton

John has chosen the theme of the materials of Colchester for this walk. He asks the question

'What makes architecture?' and will invite you to see buildings through his eyes. John is one of the foremost Conservation Architects in the country and his knowledge is astounding. He will discuss the buildings en route, from the Roman Wall and the Priory to the modern, discussing how local materials have affected their architecture. What an opportunity! Not to be missed!

Cost? £5 towards Civic Society Funds.

Tuesday 4th April 2023 Meet at 10am at Greyfriars for our April Coffee Morning Discussion

Cost? Free but donations welcome

Saturday 22nd April 2023 Meet at the small car park in The Chase, off Irvine Road, at 2pm for a guided visit to the Irvine Road Community Orchard.

The Chase is just to the right of the bridle path that leads to Bluebottle Grove. That bridle path is opposite Capel Road at its junction with Irvine Road. The Chase is next to 23a Irvine Road. How do I know this? 23a was where my mother was raised and where I, as a small child, often stayed with my grandmother. The orchard was, to me, a magical place which I was allowed to explore all by myself. Following the deaths of my mother's childhood friends, siblings Mary and Tony, who had inherited the orchard from their father, the future of the orchard was under threat. Mary had wanted the land sold for housing with the money raised going to charity. Tony wanted the orchard to remain as a beautiful refuge for wildlife and as a place for local people to enjoy. I remember him explaining his wishes to me. His love of the orchard was even more passionate than mine. Eventually, after many years of hard work led by local campaigners, a compromise was reached and, though a section of the orchard was developed, the rest remains and is being carefully restored to its former glory by a group of volunteers. Many of the very old trees are still producing a good quantity of fruit and the gaps are being filled with new fruit trees. The land has been leased for

50 years but now efforts are being made to raise the money needed to buy it, protecting it for the community, the local wildlife and for Colchester for ever. Today will be an opportunity to explore this delightful place, to find out about its restoration, plans for the future and even to think about joining the band of volunteers (our President is one!).

Cost? Free but donations for the orchard requested, please. Please give generously to this wonderful cause.

Wednesday 26th April 2023 Meet in the Salon at Greyfriars at 7pm for our annual 'Spring Up' Meeting

This meeting is similar to the Coffee Morning Discussions. It is an opportunity for those unable to come to the Tuesday morning meetings to raise issues about Colchester they would like to discuss or discover more about the Society's current work.

Cost? Free but donations welcomed

Tuesday 2nd May 2023 Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our May Coffee Morning Discussion

Cost? Free but donations welcomed

Faced with a month filled with Bank Holidays when I suspect many members will be away, I have, at the moment, decided not to book any events apart from the Coffee Morning. However, something might crop up so we'll contact you if it does to let you know.

Tuesday 6th June 2023 Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our May Coffee Morning.

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Wednesday 7th June 2023 Meet at Roman Circus House at 7pm for an illustrated talk and update about the excavations at the Essex County Hospital site.

The evening will begin with the opportunity to examine a number of the finds made at the site. The Roman Circus House cafe is being opened especially for us so that we can buy teas or coffees (thanks, Sue!) so please bring some cash with you. Once we have our drinks, it will be time for us to sit and listen to Adam Wightman, the archaeologist leading the excavations on the Essex County Hospital site, who will tell us what has been found and what is being done to protect the archaeology that will remain under the ground. It will be a really interesting talk, even for those who have been lucky enough to visit the site as Adam will update us. I know a number of you have never visited Roman Circus House so, if you need directions, please ask. There is some car parking on site. If this is full, there is a public car park a very short distance away. If you need or can offer a lift, please let us know.

Cost? Free, but please give whatever you can to support the amazing work of the Colchester Archaeological Trust.

Tuesday 13th June 2023 Meet at the Cloisters at Greyfriars at 7pm for our Annual General Meeting.

The AGM will start promptly at 7pm. There will be a break for coffee at the end of the business part of the meeting. Our AGM talk this year will be given by none other than Pam Donnelly, Chief Executive of Colchester City Council. We are so lucky! There will be the opportunity to ask questions.

Tuesday 4th July 2023 Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our July Coffee Morning Discussion

Cost? Free but donations welcomed

Saturday 15th July 2023 Meet at St Leonard at the Hythe Church at 11am

Today we are to have a guided tour of this beautiful church and a talk about its fascinating history.

Parts of St Leonard at the Hythe date from the 13th century although there is a possibility that it stands on the site of an even earlier church. It served the busy port of Colchester. The building was altered and extended in the 15th century when a splendid hammerbeam roof was added. There is a medieval parvis, a room over the south porch, only accessible by ladder. This was apparently used as a prison!

The church has an interesting history apart from its ecclesiastical use. It was used by the Royalists as a garrison for soldiers (and their horses) during the Siege of Colchester but was attacked by the Parliamentarians on 24th July 1648. The evidence can still be seen. The church also suffered quite badly from the effects of the Colchester Earthquake of 1884.

And as for the story of Kitty Canham - well, I don't know whether that will be mentioned. We'll have to wait and see! The church was closed in 1982 and is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust - and the Friends of St Leonard's at the Hythe. Morning coffee will be served. They think of everything.

Limited car parking will be available behind the Hythe Community Centre off the mini roundabout in Maudlyn Way.

Cost? Free, but donations very much welcomed by the Friends of St Leonard at the Hythe who will be our hosts. Please give generously towards the upkeep of this lovely building.

Thursday 31st August 2023 Meet at the Energy from Waste Facility at Great Blakenham at 2pm for a guided tour.

I make no apology for this visit to Suffolk's waste disposal solution although their system is different to that of Colchester and Essex. Some of our members live and/or work in Suffolk and the buildings were recognised in the 2016 Civic Trust Awards for projects that benefit their local communities, as "a striking innovation in industrial architecture". These two reasons, I hope, justify my decision!

The facility — operated by SUEZ recycling and recovery UK — burns rubbish to produce enough electricity for 30,000 homes. But all is not quite as good as it seems because the plant releases rather more carbon dioxide than expected into the atmosphere, something that the company is now trying to address with new, ground breaking, innovations. This should be an absolutely fascinating visit.

If you wish to travel by car, I will send you details of the route. There is parking on site. If you need transport, please let me know asap as I intend to arrange a minibus or two from a taxi company - cheaper than a coach. It is too early to get an accurate quotation, I am told. If you can offer a lift to others, that would be great. Please let us know.

Cost? Free if you are using your own car, and as low as I can manage if you need a place in a taxi.

Tuesday 5th September 2023 Meet at Greyfriars at 10am for our September Coffee Morning Discussion

Cost? Free but donations welcomed.

Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th September 2023 Heritage Open Days

Although Heritage Open Days extend beyond this weekend and some properties should be open during the following weekend, this is the weekend when the majority involved in Colchester's HODs offer will be receiving visitors. It is certainly the weekend when we will need volunteer stewards. It is great fun. Please complete the forms enclosed with this Newsletter if you are prepared to help us.

Sunday 24th September 2023 Meet at the War Memorial at Cowdray Crescent at 2pm for a guided tour of Victorian Colchester

Many of you will remember Ann Turner's Georgian Walk last year. She has very kindly offered to lead another walk around Colchester's city centre. This time looking at the influence of the Victorians. The walk will be taken at a leisurely pace and should last about an hour and a half. Ann is a Colchester Guide and is extremely knowledgeable. I guarantee that you will learn a lot!!

Cost? £5 towards Civic Society funds.

More about our Autumn Programme in the next Newsletter.

The objects of the Civic Society are to:

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

CURRENT OFFICERS

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