

Tower Block to Overshadow Castle



by Paul Woodman

Planning News

Trafalgar Wharf

An Outline Planning Application has been submitted to redevelop the old Vosper Thornycroft site, now known as Trafalgar Wharf at Portchester. As the boundary between Portsmouth and Fareham runs down the middle of Hamilton Road this is actually a Portsmouth Planning application.

What the developers are proposing is a mixed use development comprising a small community store on the corner of Hamilton Road (Kebab shop at present) and up to 163 dwellings in two, three and four storey buildings and one 12 storey building incorporating restaurant/

cafe facilities. We understand that Mother Kelly's Fish & Chips restaurant will probably remain on its present site within the development. One of the houses along Southampton Road is still privately owned as the owner refused to be bought out back in 2007 when there was a previous smaller application.

The 2007 the application was for about a quarter of the site, retaining the large shed behind Mother Kelly's with houses along Southampton Road and Hamilton Road and a six-storey building behind. We believe this was turned down by the environment agency through the height of the whole development being too low and close to sea level. They actually wanted to put underground parking under the six storey flats. This would have probably ended up as a large swimming pool at high tide! The new application includes higher sea defences.

On the 2007 application the Society objected to the density of housing adjacent to a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) and a Ramsar site (Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance). The poor design and lack of amenities and parking spaces for a development of this size were also a consideration in our opposing the application.

The latest application is for a considerably larger area of Trafalgar Wharf and will result in demolishing all the houses along Southampton Road and the east side of Hamilton Road plus the majority of the current maritime related industrial units on the site. All that would remain of what we have at present is the largest shed with its ship lift and adjacent dock. The remainder of the site will be new industrial units with access from Castle

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Trading Estate. Many of the old Vosper Thornycroft industrial buildings are in a poor state and need replacing but the scale of this development, both housing and industrial, will bring a huge increase in vehicle movements on and off the A27.

The houses appear to be very compact with little in the way of gardens compared to properties on the other side of Southampton Road. The 12-storey 45-metre high block of apartments with two restaurants or retail units on the ground floor is completely out of proportion to the area, especially with its close proximity to Portchester Castle and the surrounding conservation area. To give a sense of proportion the largest shed is approximately 28 metres high and Portchester Castle Keep is approximately 31 metres high. Furthermore a development of this size will have a considerable effect on facilities in Portchester such as doctors' surgeries and schools which are already struggling to cope with the current demand for places.

Catholic Church, White Hart Lane

The development plans for 7 houses on this former church site came up at Planning earlier this year, however there were quite a few issues that local residents in White Hart Lane and York Gardens felt needed addressing.



Former Catholic Church



White Hart Garden

Amongst these were the retention of the bordering hedge around the site and the mature trees, the close proximity of two of the properties to houses in York Gardens and access onto White Hart Lane at the current pinch points. The original application was sent back by FBC for changes that were mainly agreed with the developer. The application has now been approved subject to the highways issue being resolved with Hampshire County Council. This will be put out for public consultation before a decision is made so the development is again on hold.

Windmill Grove

FBC Planning received another large application in Windmill Grove to demolish an industrial unit and erect three one-bed flats, nine two-bed flats and 20 three-bed houses

with 51 parking spaces. This area is predominately bungalows and two storey houses and flats close to the foreshore of Portsmouth Harbour. The developer wanted to build a pair of three storey flats to provide a "framed entrance" into the estate. We, along with many local residents, objected to this development as it would be completely out of character with the surrounding properties with regard to the mass, density and parking problems it would cause. This application has now been withdrawn but we expect other applications in the future to develop this site, hopefully with more consideration to the scale of the surrounding properties.

Former White Hart Pub Garden

Planning consent has been given for two houses on this site and work started to clear the site over the August Bank Holiday weekend. As this site is within the Castle Street Conservation zone the wall along White Hart Lane was supposed to be retained although the developer did have permission to reduce the height. Sadly the builder, whose excuse was that neighbours had said that it was unstable, demolished the wall. We live very close to this site and were not consulted. Very convenient that it happened over a long weekend when the Council offices were closed! We will be keeping a close eye on the Catholic Church site when the demolition starts, to ensure there is not an accident to the mature trees and hedges over a weekend!

Portchester Methodist Youth Club's Annual Reunion 2012

by David Williams

In this year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee the annual reunion of former members, who formed the bulk of the membership in the 1950s, took on a special significance. Firstly, it was on Coronation Day, that the Club was selected to occupy allocated seats in the especially erected stand in Parliament Square where it overlooked Westminster Abbey. The Club had already been honoured with the invitation to one of its members to attend St. Paul's Cathedral in May 1951 for the opening ceremony by His Majesty King George VI of The Festival of Britain. Secondly members had been meeting annually ever since 1988 although there had previously been other informal get-togethers. The reason 1988 was the first was due to a promise, made to a member who emigrated to Canada in 1957, that whenever he planned a visit to England one would be arranged. This year members were so pleased to see him again as he travelled over especially for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

Members recalled that Coronation day as they gathered together very early morning at Portsmouth Town Station for the journey to London. Their early arrival at Parliament Square meant enduring quite a wait in somewhat inclement weather. However there was plenty to see. There was the arrival of the troops in ceremonial format plus the orderly arrival of the police as positions were taken up to line the route as well as, of course, seeing the various public service employees going about their various duties. Such sights, as they occurred, were loudly cheered by all and sundry as they patiently waited for events to begin. A special cheer always rang out for the street cleaner pushing his cart whilst constantly sweeping the route, collecting refuse and the horse droppings. A few hours before the official procession, there remains the permanent memory of seeing so many Royal persons, Heads of State and other important people arriving at The Abbey. However there is no doubt the biggest cheer of the day was reserved



for The Queen of Tonga as she swept into view, sat in her open carriage as the rain poured down on her, as she happily waved, without any protection, to everyone as she passed by. After the departure from the Abbey of the Coronation procession the club members joined the throng, as it was shepherded towards Buckingham Palace, to see the Royals make their balcony appearance and view that famous flypast up the Mall. That day has remained a wonderful memory for all those fortunate to be there.

Portchester Methodist Youth Club was formed out of the membership of the Wesley Junior Guild. This change came about as a result of a Methodist Conference decision in 1943 to establish a Youth Department by bringing together the work of the Guild and the Sunday schools. In 1945 the Rev. Douglas A. Griffiths was charged with this undertaking and as the youth clubs grew in number it became clear that central support was needed. So the Methodist Association of Youth Clubs came into being in 1949 under the direction of the Rev. Leonard Barnett, its first national secretary. MAYC objectives were to ensure self-organization through fellowship, friendship and association. It also pioneered mixed youth club membership. It also established a landmark activity – an annual conference and display – appropriately called the London Weekend. The Portchester Club soon sought MAYC affiliation and began to thrive under the leadership of Reg. Norgett and later Arthur Reavil.

Apart from the usual youth club activities it successfully produced annual variety shows, visited and hosted other MAYC clubs in Hampshire and arranged rambles.

One such ramble was the midnight hike to the Isle of Wight on the nearest weekend to the longest day. This entailed catching from Portsmouth the last Saturday ferry crossing to Ryde then hiking up the hill overlooking the harbour in time for a spectacular view of the sunrise. Another amazing sight was the bank of glow-worms that appeared ahead resembling a bright beacon on the path to the summit of the hill. A picnic breakfast followed before returning back to Ryde for the first ferry crossing on Sunday. This was always a very popular and eagerly awaited event. Summer Schools were organised by MAYC and club members enjoyed attending places like Guernsey and Truro. The MAYC London Weekend was also well supported by the members. In the early days overnight accommodation was arranged in the Underground shelters but later at the YMCA. On Saturday there was the annual display in the Albert Hall by a selection of MAYC clubs whilst on Sunday morning everyone attended the service in Westminster Hall. Afterwards members always made a beeline for Hyde Park Corner to listen to the various speakers and in particular the Rev. Donald Soper. He became President of Methodist Conference in 1953 and club members had the privilege of hearing one of his sermons at one Sunday morning service. The London Weekends were always a tremendous experience. At every Portchester reunion one can soon realise that the original objects of the MAYC had been well and truly introduced and preserved in the lives of the members of Portchester Methodist Youth Club. Many partnerships forged as a result but members have always joked that MAYC really stands for "Marriages Arranged at Your Convenience".

Beachwatch 2012

by John Morgan

An overcast Sunday morning and it was Beachwatch 2012 time. Having decided on a different section of the Portchester foreshore from previous years we set up base camp at the bottom of Wicor Mill Lane and waited for the volunteers to arrive.

Nine people turned up and from all local areas and we set about the task in hand. The beach was in front of what was the former Midland Cattle Product factory,



an old industrial site. We found during the clean up a collection of "finds" this year that were of a different variety from previous years and areas. Some old bones (only small ones) and many rusty pieces of metal presumably, from where boats had been brought up to the shore and taken to pieces.

All in all we collected 1163 items, a considerable increase from last year's total, with a variety of glass, paper, metal and plastics. All in all it was a very good time and we were only beaten by the hurriedly incoming tide.

Thanks to those who came along.



Chairman's Letter

by Hazel Woodman

Dear Members

I think the main lows for 2012 was the appalling weather. We had no spring or summer and the only visitors we had in our garden this year were slugs, snails and weeds. Both Paul and I were disappointed not to be able to manage a garden opening this year. However the high points of 2012 must be the Queen's Jubilee celebrations and of course London's fantastic Olympics.

The Society once again has had a busy year with most recently a lucky break with wall-to-wall sunshine for the Heritage Open days weekend. Our History walks down Castle Street led by Bryan Jerrard were a great success, ending up at St Mary's church and the brilliantly colourful Flower Festival. As we got nearer to the Castle the crowds got bigger; I haven't seen so many

picnickers in the Castle since I was a child growing up in Portchester.

The Gala still went ahead despite it being a very windy day but we, along with many other groups, were unable to be present due to the safety ban on putting up gazebos. Luckily the weather was dry on the Sunday morning we took part in Beachwatch. This year we moved along the shoreline and cleared a stretch of the foreshore at the bottom of Wicor Mill Lane. We were surprised to collect so many nuts and bolts, hundreds and hundreds in fact! In this newsletter Malcolm Cooper has written an interesting article on what we found.

I'm pleased to see the new Community Centre is nearing completion. There has



New Community Centre

been considerable controversy over the awarding of who will run the Centre but now that it is resolved we look forward to the opening in January.

The next event in our calendar is our 'Memories of Portchester' exhibition in the Parish Hall on Saturday 10th November. It's well worth coming just for the tea and cakes!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mike Glazier, our retiring Treasurer, for his hard work over the past 4 years. He has certainly kept a close eye on our finances and helped us move in the right direction. On behalf of the Committee and Members we wish him well in the future. Our new Treasurer is David Bodger. New to Committee and the Society we are looking forward to welcoming him.

I do hope you enjoy this newsletter. Paul works hard to make sure it's interesting for you all and includes forthcoming meetings and events, stories and planning updates. Thank you also to all the contributors.

Thank you all for your commitment to the Society and I wish you a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year from myself and the Committee.

Visit to Haslar Hospital

by Jonathan Tannock

On Friday 5th October fifteen Society members assembled at the Royal Naval Hospital, Haslar and were met by Mrs Anne Ryder, who, as a member of the Preservation Trust, was there to give us a tour around the site.

Mrs Ryder worked at the hospital as a QARNNS nurse and latterly as the Registry Supervisor. Together with her husband, Bob, they have a comprehensive knowledge of the establishment throughout its history.



Two and a half hours later we returned to our cars, slightly damp but elated by what we had seen and heard. The site is now going to be redeveloped to the advantage of Gosport and we had the privilege of being the last public tour.

Houses are for sale, nursing quarters will become a 4 star hotel, new housing will be built and areas set aside for community use as buildings and parkland. Most importantly, due to Anne and Bob's efforts, a lot of the buildings have preservation orders served on them by the council.

Thanks to Jonathan & Carolyn Tannock, with help from John Morgan, for arranging the visit.

Howard's Way, Portchester

by Malcolm Cooper

In a recent beach cleaning operation along the foreshore at the bottom of Wicor Mill Lane, a large number of nuts, bolts and other metal items were found. The mystery was where did this material come from.

To provide an answer we must go back to the late 1940's and early 1950's, to how the area was then. There were houses and bungalows to about half way down Wicor Mill Lane and two houses just to the south of Wicor Path. This is where the poplar trees are and the site of the infamous bone factory, source of the Portchester Pong! There were no estate or industrial buildings between Wicor Mill Lane and Seaway Grove. It was all open fields.

After the end of the war all sorts of surplus equipment were being sold off, some of it was smaller tank landing craft and numerous types of wooden craft. Around that time an assault craft, similar to the one used at Portchester Sailing Club as its first clubhouse, was beached at the end of Wicor Mill Lane. It was the home of a family named Howard whose business was scrap metal.



They would obtain smaller tank landing craft and wooden craft, which would be beached at high water spring tide so that they would be high and dry most of the time to be broken up. The steel craft would be cut into manageable pieces using oxy-acetylene torches. For the wooden craft the process was different, in as much as that when cut up the pieces were

burnt on the shore to retrieve the metal components. After burning and the fires cooled, the children of the family raked through the ashes to reclaim the metal.

Obviously not all was gathered as some of it can still be found today. By the early fifties all the craft were gone and only a trace of what went on remains!

Aspects of Portchester Life During the Early Years of the 19th Century

by Bryan Jerrard ©

A persusal of the Hampshire Telegraph & Sussex Gazette, using the internet facilities at Portchester library for the years 1802 to 1810 some three years ago provided some interesting features of life in Portchester and the many adverts for houses.

The weekly paper was delivered to a Mr Traddle who distributed it locally. In 1802 the state lottery offered two prizes of £25,000 to be shared among a planned 187,000 ticket holders. Nationally there were only 32,000 tickets for sale so buyers could buy shares in a ticket. In 1806 there were three prizes at £20,000, 120 at £50, 5,000 tickets costing £22 each and shares of these could be bought for 1/2, 1/4, 1/8 and a sixteenth for £1.5s.6d. (£1.27 1/2p)



Broad Gardens and Hospital Lane

During 14 months of peace, 1802-1803, surprisingly Haslar Hospital advertised the sale of beds and clothes of patients who had died and the same issue alerted farmers of Mr John Road's Hampshire Patent Waggon, exhibited in Fareham, that could be converted to a cart 'by removing four pins or bolts'.

In January 1806 HMS Captivity, fitted to receive prisoners of war, broke her back and sank in three minutes in Portsmouth Lake. Fortunately all on board were saved.

In the same year there was a riot in Portchester and despite looking up the original calendar of prisoners in the National Archives I still do not know why eleven women were indicted, and one man was acquitted, for riotously burning an effigy of the constable, Henry Matthews, in the village! Help needed on this one.

The Inclosure Act of 1808

Of more importance than this, the issue of October 17th, 1808 listed the 'carriage roads' that were planned to be built or widened following the Inclosure (often spelt Enclosure) Act of 1808. Under this Act the open fields in the parish that had lasted under medieval strip farming for some eight hundred years were organised into large fields and strip holders compensated with consolidated land. Landless men who grazed their animals on the common lands lost out but three large farmers benefited most.

Under article 43 of the Act published in the newspaper were details of several such roads. No.1 was from an enclosure called Broad Garden in those days and was to be 20ft wide in a southerly direction to the beach - clearly Hospital Lane if you include the margins on each side; no 2 from the 'White Hart Inn' westerly to land of the lord of the manor, Thomas Thistlethwaite, near Wicor Farm; no.3, from the pub, 29ft wide, in a northerly direction to the Fareham and Portchester main road; another planned road was from that main road to William Dore's inclosure in the west of the parish and a 'public foot way' leading to the Saltern Marsh and thence northeast to 'Morrills farm' was planned.

Objections to these plans were to be heard on Monday, 1st November 1808 at the King's Arms in Fareham probably by the surveyors John Hunter and Mr Gills, so readers had only two weeks to organise themselves should they have any objections.

The Hampshire Volunteers

DURING THE BREAK FOR PEACE Lord Hobart circulated the local volunteers in November 1802 in an effort 'to make them more effective'. A company of 50 privates was to have a captain,



The Kings Arms, now a private house in Castle Street

one lieutenant, two sergeants, one ensign and a drummer. (Drummers at this time had to know six different drum beats to act as signals in war.) If a company numbered 80 men then two lieutenants were required - and no company should exceed 100 privates. Some uniform allowances were published ranging from £3.19p to £1.00 for a private, to be repeated every three years.

Lord Hobart was war minister and colonial secretary at the time and gave his name to Hobart in Tasmania.

Houses to let and for sale

IN 20 ISSUES OF THE PAPER FROM 1802 UNTIL 1809 there were five properties advertised to be let and 12 were for sale. No rents or prices were ever published. Among the lettings were the buildings 'lately occupied by prisoners of war in Portchester. Any person hiring the premises must keep them in repair and return (them) to the government at any time, upon 3 months previous notice'. Details were

to be had from the Transport Office in Portsmouth; I wonder if they were let.

It sounds as if location, location, location was important when a modern house near Wicor Farm, 'near the sea and with views to Gosport', was to be let; two parlours, five bedrooms and a walled garden were on offer.

For another property a 'genteel family' was sought.

In a cottage 'mahogany furniture, four post beds and bedsteads, goose feather beds and mattresses, counterpanes, with calico, dimity (printed cotton) and cotton (fabrics), mahogany chairs, dining, card and tea tables and carpets' awaited a new tenant.

Some very substantial houses even by 21st century standards were for sale. In May 1803 a house 'near the sea' had stabling for six, a coach house, a planned garden and choice fruit trees. Inside were three sitting rooms, a kitchen, washing and brewing facilities, four bed chambers, five attics and 'water which is excellent'.

Catalogue details were available in principal inns in adjacent towns. We can all imagine that it was somewhere in South Street (Castle Street.)

Another property, May 21, 1804, boasted a library, a gentleman's dressing room and stabling for seven horses and cover for two carriages, and a cottage. Another came with a pew in the church!

The Phoenix Insurance Company rate for buildings and furniture was now (August 1803) 2/- per cent up to £3,000, and 2/6 for above £3,000 (10p and 12 1/2p p.a.)

Sales were sometimes conducted from the King's Arms in Castle Street and money was raised from solicitors and banks rather than building societies; these slowly emerged later in the 1840s.

A final footnote

In 1802 a Hampshire Society was set up for the 'relief of persons confined (in prison!) for small debts, with £100 already given', thus helping the rest of us!

Heritage Open Day Walks

by Hazel Woodman

It was sunshine all the way for our historic walks down Castle Street. Bryan Jerrard never ceases to amaze me with his knowledge, not only of Portchester but how he can link history to the wider picture. We had two walks during the heritage weekend with a total of over 35 visitors on the walks.

Visitors were not just local as many had travelled quite a distance, having found details on the Heritage Open Days website. Not only did they enjoy Bryan's



commentary but also tea in St. Mary's church where they had the opportunity to view the Flower Festival which

was beautifully arranged by Margaret Andrews and her team from Portchester Flower Club.

Programme of Events for 2012/13

2012

Saturday 10 November

'Memories of Portchester'

An exhibition of photos, paintings and memorabilia of Portchester past organised by the Portchester Civic Society

Parish Hall, Castle Street, Portchester, PO16 9PY,
10am - 4.30pm – for more information
02392 382778

Tuesday 20 November

AGM and 'History and Language – Just Codswallop?'

by Bryan Jerrard. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 18 December

Christmas Party with Quiz & Auction

£5 per ticket for members and guests
Parish Hall, 7.30pm

2013

Tuesday 15 January

Fort or Folly? The debate over the Palmerston Forts 1860-1894

by Julian Gazzard. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 19 February

Publishing the Bathing House Book

by Vivien Rolfe. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 19 March

Work of Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

by Dawn Preston. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 16 April

Joys of Hampshire Woodland

by Richard Hedley. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 21 May

The Fort Cumberland Guard

by Paul Hyde. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 18 June

Fire Fighting in World War 2

by Alan House. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

July & August

No Meetings

Tuesday 17 September

Antiques of Portchester & Fareham

by Nick Walker. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 15 October

Elizabethan Portchester

by Bryan Jerrard. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

Tuesday 19 November

My Life in the 17th Century

by Yvonne Hoskins. Parish Hall, 7.30pm

PARISH HALL, CASTLE STREET,
PORTCHESTER, PO16 9PY

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
AND VISITORS

PORTCHESTER MATTERS

The Newsletter of the Portchester Civic Society

Founded 2000 | Registered Charity No. 1090509

Member of:

CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England); BTCV; Solent Protection Society;
Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust; Portsmouth Harbour Conservation Group

For further information please contact our Chairman Hazel Woodman: 02392 382778

www.PortchesterCivicSociety.co.uk