

# Portsmouth Society News

The Newsletter of The Portsmouth Society - Summer 2008

## Northern Quarter Plans Approved

The Development Control Committee approved detailed plans for the Northern Quarter at their meeting on 4 June despite our opposition. The area to be developed with mainly retail and some housing includes the site of the former Tricorn Centre and the remaining properties in Charlotte Street and the northern section of Commercial Road. We suspect that there was great political pressure for the committee to approve the plans despite the many



*The car park for the new John Lewis store in Liverpool is linked to the shop by an imaginatively designed footbridge*

shortfalls in the scheme and the lack of response to the public's comments and requests for new facilities.

The essence of our objection was that the proposals for the Northern Quarter are just not good enough for Portsmouth and not as good as is being done elsewhere, for example in the massive Paradise Street retail development in Liverpool where the car park for the new John Lewis store is linked to the shop by an imaginatively designed footbridge. The new Westfield Centre in Shepherd's Bush in London is to have a "living wall" covered in sedum matting to encourage biodiversity in the urban jungle as a screen for the Southern Terrace, a pleasant outdoor area paved in Chinese granite and bordered by a wavy water feature, a good place for post-shopping relaxation and refuelling. There is no provision for anything like it here.

### Water efficiency and flooding

Water efficiency is another key factor in the Westfield Centre. "Rainwater harvesting" will be carried out by gathering water from roofs and other surfaces and storing it in a basement tank. It will then be used for flushing toilets as well as for cleaning purposes. This is the sort of thing which ought to be done in the Northern Quarter where there is a blank sheet of paper. Southern Water put part of the blame for the recent Southsea flood on the Victorian drainage system. Here the drains can be 21st century from the start. In its comments on the Northern Quarter scheme, Southern Water considered that there is insufficient capacity for surface water flow. It looks as though heads need to be knocked together.

### The Portsmouth Society's formal objection

"The Society objects to the proposals on the following grounds: the design of the buildings generally is dull and not sufficiently contemporary or sustainable; block 8 in particular (across the square from St Agatha's) is too large and too dull and should be significantly reduced in size if not omitted altogether, in order to improve the setting to St Agatha's church; the Marks and Spencer building, which we like, is too close to the church, and results in the unacceptable loss of the delightful existing orchard-like open space on the north side of the church; the proposed public footpath - the main pedestrian access to the city centre from the west - between the church and block 8 would be visually blocked by the first floor bridging block which

**In this edition ..** Northern Quarter Plans Approved, Meetings and Events, Architectural 'Bus Tour, City Vision Centres - Southampton - and Portsmouth?, Designing Portsmouth 2009/2010, Hilsea Lido Update, Southsea Flooding, World Heritage Site Bid, The Shelter on Eastney Esplanade, Thomas Ellis Owen Sculpture, Treadgolds Museum, Naval Medicine, Pyramids update, Rodney Gordon 1033-2008, Poleitis!, Philip Kolvin's Speech to the Civic Trust South East.

connects block 8 and the screen wall at the intersection with Church Square; the church does not need to be connected to the city fabric; the bridge designs throughout are utilitarian; the streets are dull and straight, and the landscape "grey"; the public art proposals are not good enough; the view of St Agatha's is hidden along the axis of Main Street; the social rented units in block 7 have no rooftop green space as the other residential units have; the development should include a large element of leisure and community use, such as a multi-purpose hall with an arts cinema, to contribute to an otherwise non-existent night time economy; it should include a crèche funded by the developer; and it should include the rebuilding of the Lady Chapel to St Agatha's Church."

Roger James' concluding comments to the Development Control Committee were:

"If you are minded to refuse this application, it will not be enough to say that you don't like it or even that it's not good enough nor even that it is almost totally lacking in imagination."

"I suggest that a more concrete reason for rejection could be that it has ignored and rejected the demands of the public consultation. The government is keen on consultations and I don't think even the government likes the idea of consultations being just for show - "We've asked the public. Now we can do what **we** want". Not one of the specifics asked for by the public is being provided: no evening entertainment, nothing for children, no ice rink, not enough open space. Portsmouth deserves better!"

Roger James

## Meetings and Events

Meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month (not Jan/Aug/Sep). There is no admission charge - all are welcome. For the latest programme see <a href="http://www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk">www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk</a> .	
Sunday 22 June <i>2-4pm, Historic Dockyard</i>	<b>Porter's Garden Party</b> with Strawberry Tea. Booking essential – phone 023 9286 3799. See separate article in this newsletter.
Saturday 28 June <i>2pm, Royal Naval Museum</i>	<b>Portsmouth Harbour, the Isle of Wight &amp; Spithead as a World Heritage Site</b> – a talk by Celia Clark. Free. Booking necessary, call 023 9282 6722.
Wednesday 2nd July <i>Meet at Alverstoke Parish Centre at 7pm. Travel by Ferry / Bus from Portsmouth Harbour pontoon at 6.15pm</i>	<b>Walking Tour of Alverstoke.</b> A summer evening stroll around this historic and picturesque village. Travel by Ferry / Bus to avoid the long drive. Ferry from Portsmouth Harbour pontoon at 6.15pm. Bus no. 88 - 6.35pm from Gosport bus station to Alverstoke (Jellicoe Road). Return by 8.21pm bus and 8.45pm ferry. PLEASE CHECK BUS TIMES NEARER TO EVENT.
1-3 August <i>Southsea Common</i>	<b>Portsmouth Summer Show</b> on Southsea Common. The society will be manning a stall in the community section. If you'd like to help please contact Celia Clark (details at the end of the newsletter)
Saturday 9th August <i>9.30am at King Henry I Street (next to the Guildhall)</i>	<b>Architectural Bus Tour</b> – A morning tour of Portsmouth on a vintage double-decker bus looking at buildings of interest with short visits to two or three of them. Booking essential. See enclosed booking form.
Wednesday 1st October <i>7.00pm at the University's St George's Building</i>	<b>Pictures form Southsea Seafront</b> – Garrick Palmer will talk about his lifelong affection for Southsea Seafront and will show some of the many photographs he has taken there. Coffee will be served from 6.45pm.
Wednesday 5th November <i>7.00pm at the University's St George's Building</i>	<b>Planning Aid</b> – Georgina Wrighton will talk about the new legislation on Planning Aid and how it affects community groups. Coffee will be served from 6.45pm.
Wednesday 3rd December <i>7.00pm at the University's St George's Building</i>	<b>South Coast Design Forum</b> - Carl Leroy Smith will speak about the work of the forum. Carl is an architect and is Chair of the SCDF Portsmouth branch. Coffee will be served from 6.45pm.

## Subscription Reminder

The society's membership year runs from April to March and subscriptions for 2008/9 are now due. Thanks to those of you who have renewed already and a gentle reminder to those who haven't. We sent a renewal form in the previous mailing but if you've mislaid it then please contact the membership secretary, Jean Thompson, on 023 9282 1667.

## Architectural 'Bus Tour

We will be running another architectural 'bus tour, an event last run in June 2006, when on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August. Last year, the excellent water tour of Portsmouth Harbour replaced the 'bus tour. Clive Wilkin, the owner of the Eastbourne Corporation 1950 double-deck A.E.C. - previously used - has agreed to provide transport. The tour will again last about 3 hours, starting at 0930 from Guildhall Square (King Henry I Street). We will make two or three planned stops to visit premises of particular significance. The cost per person has been set at £6.00, in order to cover fuel (plus wear and tear), a donation to Clive for his vehicle and a little income for the Society. In order that the experience shall be comfortable, it is intended to carry no more than 45 persons.

Please use the enclosed booking form, providing information as requested. You are invited to book as soon as possible, not only to secure a place but to assist in the organization, should numbers require hiring a second vehicle.

Thank you. Bruce Oliver.

## Southsea Flooding

On 21 May residents were invited to see Southern Water's latest scheme for tackling one aspect of Southsea's liability to flooding. Less than three weeks later after a very heavy spell of rain the Clarendon Road area, practically the same area that was flooded in 2000, was flooded again from below by erupting sewers. There are three quite unrelated threats to southern Portsmouth: from the mass of storm water which drains down to Eastney from virtually the whole of Portsea Island in periods of heavy rain; from the sea breaking over the beach area into the low lying area of Southsea; from a combination of high tide and southerly wind which drives water into the Broad Street area. The problems are compounded by the unified drainage system - domestic sewage and surface rainwater all go into the same pipes. Southern Water's plans which we were invited to see are directed at the first of these threats. A bank of five new electric pumps is to be buried under Bransbury Park to back up the six diesel pumps which were overwhelmed in 2000. The electric pumps, unlike the diesels, can continue in operation even when flooded.

Southern Water's director Geoff Loader said Portsmouth simply could not cope with storms of the ferocity of the one that hit Portsmouth on Monday. He said the only chance of preventing floodwater backing up through the city's Victorian sewerage system would be to build a giant new pumping station at Eastney with a second outflow to carry storm water out of the city.

'We put a plan to do just that before city councillors last year but they rejected it because the buildings were too large' [and unsightly!], said Mr Loader. But even if that building had been approved it would not have been finished to cope with Monday's storm.

"I can only apologise to all those people who were affected by flooding," Mr Loader said. 'It's horrible for them, but the unfortunate fact is that Portsmouth cannot cope with such intense rainfall. "The only way we can alleviate the problem is to build a secondary outfall at Fort Cumberland, Eastney. Our last plan was rejected but we're not going to walk away. Our engineers are working with the city council to try to find an acceptable way of building that second outfall."

Work is due to begin next month on an emergency pumping station beneath Bransbury Park, Eastney. That is the scheme we were invited to see. "But even if that had been available on Monday we would still have had flooding in the city because the water and sewage would still only have one outfall to go through," said Mr Loader. 'It's a bit like putting the plug in your bath and turning on both taps. Eventually the overflow pipe will not be able to cope. But if you had two overflows you would be all right."

Mr Loader said that unlike the massive flood which hit Southsea in 2000, Eastney pumping station was not overwhelmed.

Eight years ago the six diesel pumps there were knocked out by floodwater. "That did not happen this time. All the pumps continued to work flat out. But it simply wasn't enough."

There was criticism of Southern Water in the News, some of it rather unfair. "Here we go again" a reader said "By their own logic Southern Water would do better to concentrate their efforts in constructing the new outfall before putting in more pumps. They will be wasting up to £20 million of tax payers money.

After all it was reported that ONLY 30 ml (just over one inch) of water fell on Monday. It wasn't more pumps that were needed it was better vigilance on the part of Southern Water and proper clearing of drains!."

A very long-term and expensive solution is the adoption of a dual system, one for domestic sewage and one for surface water.

They keep blaming the Victorian sewers; but it seems likely that the recent flooding has been exacerbated by the 1960s deep north-south tunnelled interceptor sewers, designed to assist drainage; but which in times of heavy rain they may disastrously speed water from north to south.

*Roger James*

## **City Vision Centres - Southampton - and Portsmouth?**

Several members of the Executive Committee were at the launch of the huge Southampton City Vision Centre models in the Art Gallery which was made by Portsmouth School of Architecture commissioned by the City Council from the Solent Centre for Architecture and Design. It is intended as a planning tool and cost £125,000. The money came from the cancellation of the unpopular laser light scheme. Outreach events include "Modelling the City" 28 June Family Workshops. Several other local authorities are keen to have similar models, including Eastleigh, Bradford and Sheffield.



*A section of the City Vision Southampton model*

The Society and others in the city including Carl Leroy Smith, chair of the South Coast Design Forum, are keen to have a model of

Portsmouth. It must be fully accessible so that the public can see it and interact with it. The Society sees it as a tool to help local people understand proposals for change - which should be clearly identified - so they can comment on them. Southampton's model is designed to stimulate economic development, inviting developers to build. But where should the Portsmouth model be? The Mountbatten Gallery was the obvious place, but that opportunity was lost. The Civic Offices? The undercroft of the office block between the Civic Offices and Portsmouth and Southsea Station? If it were done for Portsmouth it could be in 2009-10. If it was to celebrate the World Heritage site it would need to include Gosport, Portsdown Hill and Fareham Creek, which would make it very large unless the scale was reduced or the model only shown in sections except on special occasions.

The Southampton City Vision Centre model is well worth visiting and is displayed on the ground floor of the Art Gallery at the Southampton Civic Centre (open daily - free admission).

## **Designing Portsmouth 2009/2010**

Celia Clark and Roger James attended a conference run by the RIBA, Architects' Journal and Architectural Review "Designing Liverpool" to celebrate architecture and enhancement of the public realm in the City of Culture which is also a World Heritage Site. We suggested that we have a similar event for buildings professionals, developers and local people here, perhaps associated with the World Heritage Site bid. A second day might explore beneficial reuse of the historic defence estate. This idea is now being worked up.

## **Evening walking tour of Alverstoke**

We have arranged for a guided tour of Alverstoke village on Wednesday 2nd July 2008 led by local historian, David Maber, starting from the Parish Centre on Green Road, PO12 2ET at 7pm and lasting approximately 1 hour. The tour is free but there will be a collection for our guide.

*"Alverstoke encompasses land stretching from Haslar to Stokes Bay. The village lies within half a mile of the shore of Stokes Bay and near the head of a creek which extends a mile westward from Portsmouth Harbour. 'Alverstoke' is a corruption of the name Alwara, a former Lady of the Manor, and Stoke, a settlement on the area of Alverstoke known as the Marsh Ground. Alverstoke is mentioned in the Domesday Book as Alwarestock. The Institute of Naval Medicine (INM), one of the sites of the MoD Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, is located here. Residents of Alverstoke are sometimes called "The Alverstocracy" by Gosportians in a tongue-in-cheek fashion, due to the perceived higher social status of the area." – Wikipedia!*

To avoid the long journey by road, some of us will be travelling by ferry and bus and leaving Portsmouth Harbour (Gosport Ferry pontoon) at 6.15pm and returning by 9pm. Please note that the times above may change without notice. You are advised to have change for the ticket machines at the ferry pontoon (return ferry fares are Adult £2.20, Child / Senior £1.50).

## **Porter's Garden Party in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard**

The garden is looking even lovelier as it approaches its eighth midsummer, as flower beds and hedges mature. Help us raise funds by bringing your family and friends to enjoy fresh party fare, fruit punch, (or a soft drink) and music in a beautiful garden for £5.00 on Sunday 22 June, 2 – 4pm. To attend, please contact: Dr Ann V Coats, Coordinator, Friends of the Porter's Garden, 44, Lindley Avenue, Southsea PO4 9NU Tel: 02392 863799. The garden is just inside the Victory Gate entrance (turn right past the white Porter's Lodge into College Road where you will find the garden). If the weather is against us, we will repair to Action Stations. The Porter's Garden Web site address is [www.portersgarden.hampshire.org.uk](http://www.portersgarden.hampshire.org.uk).

*Pauline Powell*

## **Hilsea Lido Update**

"Hilsea Lido Revival": We now have our first Business Proposal, a document which has been compiled by our Vice-chair, Sabrina Richards as a preliminary discussion document to the detailed financial analysis which will eventually be required. She has done an excellent job and sets out our vision for the Lido, how it could be run as a whole site, the main pool, the Blue Lagoon Function Suite and the splash pool. However, to do this we will of course, need the support of the local community and the City Council.

Meeting with the Leader of the City Council on 23 May: We were able to present this document to the City Council at a meeting with the Leader; Cllr. Terry Hall, Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure and two Hilsea Ward Councillors, Frank Jonas and Donna Jones, JP; Lynda Fisher, Strategic Director; Simon Lindsey and Seamus Myer from the Leisure Department; Stephen Checkley, Head of the Asset Management Service and Toby Livermore from the Asset Management Team. This was a very positive and constructive meeting with the result that the City Council agreed to consider in principle the asset transfer of the Lido to our Group subject to the results of a comprehensive survey of the buildings and plant on the site. This survey will be paid for by the City Council and we will work with them on its specification.

Site Volunteer Scheme: The Splash Pool opened on 24 May from 11.00am to 6.00pm (weather permitting) and will stay open now until 31 August. Following discussions with the City Council and Parkwood Leisure, who have been very helpful, we have a team of volunteers who go on to the site every Wednesday morning from 10.00 - 12.00 to do light maintenance such as picking up litter and pulling up weeds. This is a very practical and constructive way to support the Lido and all volunteers are most welcome. It's also a chance to sport our fancy new group Tee-shirts and badges which are available at our meetings..

The Main Pool: This is due to open on 26 July from 11.00am to 6.00pm and will close on 31 August. This is of course, its last season of being subsidised by the City Council. We hope to expand our Site Volunteer Scheme to include the main pool and also to have a presence there for an hour or so every day during its opening season. We hope that everyone will pop in and see us - don't forget your swimming costume and towel!

Survey of Splash Pool Users: A survey to find out the views of the users of the Splash Pool started on 24 May. We're very interested in asking people what they think of issues such as the Splash Pool opening hours being divided into two daily sessions; the age limit of 8 on children able to use it; the opening hours

of the refreshment kiosk; whether or not people would be willing to pay to use it; other facilities they would like to see on the site and how far they have travelled to get there. The questionnaire is intended to complement the survey of the main pool users carried out last year.

**Fund-Raising Activities:** Fund-raising is an essential part of our work and continues apace. Our first fund-raising dinner was held at the Pizza House in Hilsea on 28 April. Not only did we raise £1200 but we had a lovely meal and a most enjoyable evening. We are very grateful for all their support and sponsorship and are already looking forward to the next one! Our next jumble sale is on 13 September at 2.00pm at the HAMRA hall and we'll be pleased to take all your unwanted presents etc.

**HAMRA Meetings:** Our monthly meetings at the Residents' Association Hall in Howard Road, Hilsea (just off Northern Parade) are open to everyone. They are very important as it's here that we report on all our activities, plan for the future and discuss and take decisions. It's not all business, there's always time for a cup of tea and a chat and a chance to win the raffle. The next meetings are 23 June; 28 July; 18 August; 22 September; 27 October; 24 November and 15 December from 7.00 -10.00pm. Things are moving quickly now so if you want to keep up with what's going on, don't be left out - this is where to come to find out all the latest!

**Thanks to Society:** Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the Society for all your help and support over the last 18 months which is very much appreciated, In particular, my special thanks go to Roger James who has worked like a Trojan in support of the Lido for many years now. Well, at last I can say that all the hard slog has paid off and we are beginning to see some reward for all our efforts - it strikes me that saving the main pool is the easy part, it's making the site work as a whole that's the issue for us now. And as they say, if you want to keep it, use it!!

*Jane Smith, Chairman, Hilsea Lido Pool for the People. Tel: 023 92-873259*

## **The Shelter on Eastney Esplanade**

After we had objected in writing, Roger James had been a deputation at the May meeting of the Development Control Committee to object in person to the proposed demolition of the shelter on the esplanade at Eastney opposite the former Royal Marines barracks, a 1950s reinforced concrete flat-roofed structure open at both ends. It is a twentieth century successor to the splendid Victorian shelters (now beautifully restored) on Clarence Esplanade. The application had been made by the city's parks department because of defects in the overhanging part of the concrete slab roof where small chunks of concrete had fallen off. This item had been to the committee in December 2007 when the decision had been to refuse permission for demolition on the grounds that "The proposed demolition would be unacceptable, by reason of the distinctive post-war architecture of the shelter and its positive contribution to the townscape of the seafront". The same item came back to the Committee in April 2008 when they deferred decision, asking for information about costs and alternatives. Now here it was again in May 2008 with a report which included the estimate that the cost of repair would be in the order of £50,000.

Roger James had been supported by Councillor Lee Hunt in his objection (21 May) to the recommendation to demolish. (The green sheet confronting the meeting said under - supplementary matters - "The city council cannot grant consent for its own applications to demolish buildings in conservation areas. Recommendation amended to read – The Secretary of State be recommended to grant conservation area consent for the demolition of the existing building."). RJ said that the history of this application gave the strong impression that there was some powerful person in the council who was quite determined to have this building down. Despite the committee's clear decision against demolition, the matter had been brought back after less than six months. He hoped the committee would stick to their guns and not be browbeaten into changing their minds. The councillors had a paper detailing estimated costs (not available to RJ till after the meeting). Repair and refurbishment, which was not recommended, would cost in the region of £50,000. A new smaller shelter will cost about £20,000.

In the discussion that followed in the DC Committee Councillor Sparshatt said that the Committee had refused permission in December 2007; it seemed probable that they would again refuse permission now less than six months later. How many more times would the matter have to be on the agenda? The City Solicitor replied that it could come back again only if there were some relevant changes of circumstances.

He did not explain how the matter had come back now in unchanged circumstances. Anyhow the committee duly refused permission. It remains to be seen what happens next. On the matter of the estimated costs the Society is asking the opinion of engineers who have previously given us helpful advice.

## **The Pyramids**

Following the eleventh hour decision of Portsmouth City Council, in March, to reprieve The Pyramids Leisure Centre, at least until the end of April 2009, the facilities have remained open. This was in response to two deputations by The Friends of the Pyramids (FoP) supporting petitions containing over 9000 signatures to: SAVE THE PYRAMIDS.

The facilities and are now attracting record attendances in the Fun Pools, particularly at week-ends and in school holidays with the wave machine and the flumes being in high demand

Following the earlier months of neglect, vandalism and dilapidation, The FoP were invited by the City Council to assist the operators Parkwood in identifying priorities and target dates to render the facilities shipshape and safe and to stimulate improved attendance

Whilst safety elements have properly been preserved, progress with some refinements and less essential but still important components and repairs has been handicapped by bureaucratic negotiations between Parkwood and the City Council. As an example, the boarded-up broken windows remain un-repaired because the Council has run out of stock and has not replaced it.

The exterior grounds had remained neglected and overgrown until FoP prompted Parkwood to contact the Probation service for much needed tender loving care. The best that can be said is that the Pyramids are safe and functional but still not entirely shipshape.

Utilisation of the adjacent entertainment facilities, namely the Plaza (capacity over 1,000) and The Orangery (Former Night Club) has been handicapped because long term bookings were turned away and are not willing to book again unless a longer term continuity is assured. In the Interim, FoP have suggested a portable ice rink – much demanded by the populace but not currently viewed enthusiastically by the Operators. The Frog on the Front still awaits an (unlicensed) new operator

FoP have sought to stimulate attendance by negotiating with PCC and the bus companies to re-route two bus services past The Pyramids, to provide discount Parking, and to retain a Taxi Rank that was to be discontinued. We are also seeking a Grant from Southsea Town Council to subsidise transport for children and others to The Pyramids and to provide more publicity and promotion for the facilities.

Whilst we are hopeful for even more improved attendances throughout the summer and into the winter months, the longer term fate of the Pyramids remains in question. Currently The Pyramids are For Sale on the open market. Bids are expected this very month. The public have clearly indicated in Press and Newspaper Surveys that they want a leisure centre to remain on the Seafront.

The hopeful solution is that PCC can find a developer who is prepared to Keep the Pyramids as-is, (it is only 20 years old) and properly exploit its full potential or to rebuild it in a similar format. We certainly do not want hotels, casinos, museums or anything that will not support the wishes of the people and the guidance from central government on swimming for everyone. That is what the Pyramids is all about...

*Bob Adderley, Chair, Friends of the Pyramids*

## **World Heritage Site Bid**

The Steering Group now await renewed commitment by the five local authorities: Gosport, Isle of Wight, Fareham, Portsmouth and Winchester to the support they expressed before the very successful public launch on 28 January in Boathouse 6, attended by over 150 people. Commodore Steele, Naval Base Commander is being consulted, and some very important backers to the bid have been secured, including major local employers in Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight. Since the election Portsmouth Chief Executive has asked new Strategic Director, Kathy Wadsworth, to be responsible for liaison with the other local authorities. We still await the guidelines for new applicants, expected from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport since last July. They are apparently sitting on the Minister's desk!

Spreading the word about the proposal continues. A workshop was organised for Neighbourhood Forums and the community network on 19 May and the chairs of the forums reported enthusiasm for the idea. A subcommittee is planning a website, distinctive branding of the project, a new leaflet and sponsorship. The Head of Grammar School is discussing the school's involvement in the bid, and Celia Clark is speaking about the bid on 28 June in the Royal Naval Museum at 2pm as part of the Portsmouth Festivities, and to Museums Society on 17 July. There is a need to train a corps of presenters of WH idea. Please contact Celia Clark if you would like to help (02392 732912)

Researching the Nomination Document modeled on the Liverpool one continues. The theme is 'the World's Cultural Seascape' and defence of the realm. Many unusual aspects of local history and the development of technology are being identified including the history of medicine at Haslar and early events in the history of flight at Grange Airfield and flight training on what is now HMS Sultan. Much technological development in the twentieth century has still to be researched. If you would like to help with preparing the document - researching or designing it, please contact me!

*Celia Clark*

## **Naval Medicine**

'A vitamin-deficient diet, lack of hygiene, and the environmental stress and tropical infections of long voyages were soon manifested in characteristic sea diseases which, together with the injuries of naval voyages demanded a permanent naval medical service manned by doctors training in both surgery and physic.' Several major advances in medicine were made by surgeons and doctors based at Haslar Hospital. Lancelot Haire in 1785 ended the convention of leaving ligatures long and thus terminated a potential source of infection. "James Lind was perhaps the greatest of all naval surgeons, and his death in comparative obscurity illustrates the fate of highly original thinkers dependent on powerful and unreceptive patrons.....The controlled clinical trial is usually considered to be a comparatively modern idea, yet it has been used in the navy for over 200 years."

The pattern was established in 1747, when he took to sea in HMS Salisbury twelve precisely matched cases of scurvy, placed them on a scorbutic diet and gave each pair of patients a popular remedy. The only pair to recover had been given oranges and lemons (Lind 1753 A Treatise of the Scurvy Edinburgh p.191). He evolved a method of reducing lemon juice to small bulk suitable for carrying in ships' boats and devised a durable survival ration of animal and vegetable concentrates. It is probable that his research on nutrition was responsible for 'portable soup' made from animal offal and containing a high concentrate of vitamin A. Night blindness, often responsible for wrecks at sea, seems to have disappeared from the Navy after this and did not reappear until the Admiralty, failing to see the implications, withdrew it from ships in the mid nineteenth century.

It was 48 years after Lind had conclusively demonstrated that lemon and orange juice could cure and prevent scurvy before a reluctant Admiralty could be persuaded to make a general issue to the fleet. That was only because the more socially acceptable Sir Gilbert Blane endorsed Lind's work. Within two years scurvy had virtually disappeared, and Carré, the French medical historian, believes that Lind, by providing British admirals with fit men, contributed decisively to Napoleon's defeat.

Typhus was similarly eliminated by Lind's measures and the incidence of malaria and yellow fever drastically reduced by his preventative proposals. Cockburn – the Stuart physician of the fleet in 1696 - Lind, Blane, Trotter and Roberson all recognized that Typhus fever was brought on board in the infected clothing of new recruits, and they advised segregation, personal hygiene and a naval uniform. The Admiralty turned a deaf ear and preferred the economic catastrophe of a huge annual loss of trained manpower to modest financial outlay on the uniform suggested by its surgeons. Despite the backing of Lord Barham, Nelson's First Lord of the Admiralty, in was 1857 before a uniform was decreed necessary, and then not so much on health grounds as to prove the Navy with a better image.

Many of Lind's observations were nevertheless overlooked: his recognition of the role of fomites and apparently carriers in hospital infections, his emphasis on upon a high energy-protein diet with a variety of vitamin-rich foods and a high fibre content in the form of wholemeal and bran. The role of dietary fibre in maintaining health has only now been recognized through the observations of a modern naval surgeon T L

Cleave (1974 The Saccharine Disease John Wright Bristol) disregarded by contemporaries until his theories were universally accepted.

Lind was also the first to point out the clinical signs of hypothermia following exposure and immersion, the importance of rapid rewarming and fatal consequences of giving alcohol. He proposed intermittent chest compression and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for the apparently drowned, and lightning conductors for ships in order to reduce the high mortality from electrical burns. He was a pioneer in hospital reform, with standards of cleanliness, patient care, dispensing safeguards and control of infection to rival modern ideals. In 1742 John Atkins anticipated the modern postgraduate medical centre when he proposed that a wing of the Naval Academy at Portsmouth be taken over to provide a training facility for the naval surgeon, with a pathological museum, dissecting room, a theatre for monthly lectures, 'a small kitchen, with a little Parlour or two to withdraw...after business'. Such meetings first appear to have been held in British hospital ships under Cockburn's influence, but in 1747, after the medical disasters of Anson's voyage, an 'Association of the Navy Surgeons of the Royal Navy of Great Britain' was founded in an attempt to raise the standards of medical practice. It anticipated Britain's first postgraduate medical society, the Medical Society of London, by 26 years. These initiatives were all short-lived. Yet few of these observations and achievements influenced contemporary medical practice, while the danger of giving alcohol to cases of hypothermia has only been recognized in the 1970s.

A longer version of this article appears on our Web site [www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk).

Celia Clark

## Thomas Ellis Owen Sculpture by John Thompson

This sculpture by John Thompson was commissioned for the TE Owen Festival in 2004, but its final positioning to celebrate Owen's key town planning and architectural skills to the shaping of Southsea has still not been agreed. Members of the Society were invited to view it in the Art Space studios. The proposed site in front of Owen's Friary - built for the workers on St. Jude's - is inappropriate. If St. Jude's church cannot site it within their garden and new entrance at the corner of Kent Road and Palmerston Road, the original site in Clarendon Road facing down Palmerston Road is clearly the best site for this four-square structure, which takes its imagery from features of Owen buildings. We will be raising this with the City Council and Southsea Centre Manager, Samatha Faye.



## Treadgolds Museum, Portsea

A grant of nearly £1m has been awarded to Learning Links (Southern) Ltd towards the restoration of Treadgolds Museum, a series of linked Victorian and Georgian buildings, in Bishop's Street, Portsea. The Treadgolds family, who owned the buildings until 1988, ran an ironmongers shop, a forge and iron wholesalers for over 200 years on the same site. The forge and ironmongers remain intact, complete with stock, and were open to the public as a museum until 2003, when the owners Hampshire County Council were forced to close the museum for health and safety reasons.

This success is a significant landmark in years of work by Learning Links to achieve wider recognition of the special status of the Treadgolds Museum, to raise the money to redevelop the partially Grade 2 listed buildings and bring them back into use for the benefit of the local community."

Plans for the redevelopment include cost effective office space for small voluntary and community organisations, heritage space and display of artifacts, an education room, a community run café, meeting and venue hire space, a gift shop and the reintroduction of a working Blacksmith's forge, offering opportunities for training and apprenticeships in traditional trades and crafts. It is anticipated that the new Treadgolds Centre could be open to the public as early as late 2010.

We look forward to seeing the plans which are being prepared by Parnells of Havant.

## Philip Kolvin's speech to Civic Trust South East AGM

From my seven years' campaigning to preserve the historic landscape of Crystal Palace from a multiplex cinema, as well as awareness of the night-time economy's impact on communities, and my work as a lawyer specialising in licensing and planning, I am very much aware of how the 750 civic societies registered with the Civic Trust are the champions of civic pride. I believe that local people should not just be consulted, but should play a key role in developing their own community assets. The heyday of the Civic Trust was when it was founded 51 years ago. There was tremendous hope in 1957. The Civic Trust had a lot of sway over local and national issues. It pioneered Development trusts and Conservation Areas. Ironically, it was founded on the same day that Harold Macmillan made his "You've never had it so good" speech. But civic societies go back to the early nineteenth century. In 1957 there was concern that new buildings were despoiling our historic streetscapes. Civic societies are more powerful, local and sensitive in their responses to local changes. It is essential that they drive the movement from the bottom up.

The challenges they face are more complex now, for two reasons. There was a confidence in the 1940s and '50s in Town and Country Planning, in finding local solutions in Local Plans, made in response to consultations, with government guidance translated by elected local authorities. Now we have a more top-down system of planning than ever before – for example the Planning Bill. On the largest developments: incinerators, power stations, airports – there will be no platform for local people. A new quango, the Infrastructure Planning Commission is bound to take decisions in accordance with national policy – overriding local plans and planners, for example the Green Belt, except where they would involve breaches of EU law. This represents a stripping away of local democracy. Another example is the Ecotowns, many on former military bases – free standing developments in the countryside. The concept of Sustainability developed twenty years ago when it meant borrowing from our children as much as we need and passing on the environment to the next generation – an exercise of stewardship – has been perverted and contaminated by government into 'Business growth' – in line with the definition of 'sustainable development' in Barker's Report. The government will decide: no local input – all will be top-down. We have to influence debate nationally. This is our only real hope.

In our local campaigns we also need to be aware of the wider picture. The issues we face are becoming more global. Global organisations dictate to governments. In this context, it is hard to give a sense of power to individuals. Does this fit with what the Civic Trust and civic societies do? In our seven year campaign at Crystal Palace we managed to change UK planning law. Environmental Assessments, if they have not been carried out at outline planning stage must be done at detailed stage. The second reason is more difficult. We grew up with a sense of locale. But now kids are more influenced by what happens globally. They are talking to a global network run by international institutions, not the local council. When I speak to schools they are concerned about how to act locally when the polar ice cap is melting, there are wars of religion, over water, plantings of fuel instead of food. We need to engage with their issues. They are seeking a new version of Citizenship. If you want to be a subject of the world, be a citizen of your patch – what you can control. Civic means municipal, but it also has a wider meaning – civic leadership and duty. We need to inculcate citizenship, create practical steps to enable the idea to happen. Only 5% of civic societies have members under 25. There has also been a drastic decline in numbers of societies: there were 3000 in 1971 and now there are 750.

Other organisations such as the CPRE and the FOE can commission research but we have fewer resources. At the same time, it is getting harder to increase membership. People don't necessarily want to belong, just to contribute. The Civic Trust need to pick up the energies it once had. But income from "programmes" such as Green Flag (Civic Trust is re-tendering for the right to run this programme, which has been hugely successful, involving over 800 parks nationally) and Heritage Open Days is ring-fenced and there is no real scope for this to cross-fund other streams of work.. Heritage Open Days produces 1.5 million visitors to 3,500 sites. English Heritage funds support staff for community outreach, and education for schools. The Civic Trust Awards focus on locally significant schemes but they are not run at a profit. A Purple Flag for the night time economy is already endorsed by the Home Office – so that you can visit your town centre safely and enjoy a diverse range of entertainment with broader market appeal and get home safely. I am chair of

a cross sector committee to establish a national qualification for managers of the night time economy, and create partnerships to market town centres. There is also Bizzfizz – community enterprise programmes.

But my target is the civic society movement, which we must rejuvenate. There's been a huge decrease in numbers – a 75% loss in 30 years. We haven't raised subscriptions in two decades. The bottom line is that 630 societies registered with the Civic Trust out of the total of 750 in the country only raise £60,000 from their subscriptions. You cannot run a movement on that. The real current cost is £140,000 – and we have one member of staff. We are £80,000 short by next April. This is not sustainable. We need to unify the movement with a common purpose, and an authoritative voice. The Board is in the process of reconstituting itself with a stronger civic society representation. Societies need tender loving care! But the movement needs to be self-financing. A skeletal staff for civic societies will cost £250,000 – if we are to be a national movement. Fully staffed to provide proper regional support will cost £750,000. The movement must improve its national profile. As chairman I intend to get out to the nine regions. Civic society membership is more than the Labour Party's, but we must increase our capacity to enable it to exercise influence. We need a full-time press officer – at the moment a shared post. There is no full time employed Policy Officer for the movement. We need a Campaigns Officer – as any big movement should have – as does the CPRE with its litter campaign. We need to organise on the web – the next generation's area of interest. We need educational and training support for the regions. The national centre has to service and be able to offer time to local organisations, which need help from the centre to get the message across. Regional support on local plans, conservation area – a direct service to local organisations, which could have inputs on national policy. Officers are needed to listen to the grass roots and synthesise what they say to the centre – the voices of a quarter of a million people. All funds raised need to be ring-fenced for the movement. We need a fund-raising campaign, to support the notion of giving. We have no fund-raiser, no corporate sponsorship in the Civic Trust. We are planning lectures on citizenship as part of the campaign. There should be the instantaneous ability to contact members via the website. This year we will start fund-raising and set up better contacts with civic societies, a civic society website, but we don't have the resources for programmes. When civic societies are collecting subs, we would like to see an element which goes to the Civic Trust, with an opt-out clause as trades unions have. It's vital to let people know about the Civic Trust and what it does.

Philip Kolvin was appointed Chairman of the Civic Trust in July 2007.

## **Rodney Gordon 1933 - 2008 Architect of the Tricorn 1962-2004**

Rodney Gordon, inspiration for the architecture of the Tricorn, died on 30 May. When we were campaigning to save the Tricorn we got to know him: an inspiring, loveable man still designing in his late seventies. He and his partners met the developers several times, proposing a huge overarching structure and new access ramps to a revitalised Tricorn, but they did not want to know. Ironically, the Portsmouth Development Control committee granted permission for the deadly dull Northern Quarter scheme on the site at the same time as Rodney's enjoyable wake at the Chelsea Arts Club, where we met several of his partners who worked on the Tricorn including Peter Abbott, Malcolm Wood and Victor Wybrow.



*Rodney Gordon 1933-2008 Robert Cook*

Rodney Gordon was born in London and trained at Hammersmith School of Building, Arts and Crafts and the Architectural Association where one of his tutors was Arthur Kohn from the Bauhaus. In the early fifties the AA was very creative, promoting idealistic socialism.. Brutalism has been associated with concrete, but the building could be made of anything and still be called brutalist. Brutalism was about ethics, not aesthetics, not particular materials. Nakedness was a theme for the Tricorn, the huge multi-layered megastructure built by Owen Luder and Rodney Gordon in Portsmouth - in contrast to the showiness of modern shopping centres.

Gordon qualified from the AA in 1957 and took a job in the General Division of the London County Council. This was a time of new and exciting architecture. Shutter-board concreting had proved its worth at the National Film Theatre, on the South Bank where the Festival Hall was built. He cut his teeth on the Alton Estate, Roehampton just off the A3. While he was working on the silver box Faraday Memorial at the Elephant and Castle (now listed) he was asked to 'ghost' for Owen Luder, who had been commissioned to design a new shopping centre in the area. They maximised office space by designing separate circulation towers, lifts and toilets at each end, for example in Eros House in Catford London SE8, the partnership's first Brutalist building completed in 1963

When the Tricorn was new, there were trumpet blasts in its praise. Ian Nairn, sad in The Observer (19 February 1967): "Flamboyance in Concrete" "At last there is something to shout about in Portsmouth. Britain's primary naval port has a dreary record of post-war rebuilding: in fact nothing really grand has gone up there since the city hall was built in the 1890s. The new Tricorn development, designed by Owen Luder, will change all that. It is in Charlotte Street, part of the main shopping centre, and it provides the full developers' repertoire: shops, supermarket, rooftop carparking, a tower car-park as well, flats, two pubs and a wholesale market. This is, in fact, a complete town, and it has been given an architectural orchestration in reinforced concrete that is the equivalent of Berlioz or the 1812 Overture: trumpets, double percussion cannons, the lot. Now the rhino has got into the marketplace, and I wonder if British architecture will ever be the same again. Photographs are almost useless: a trip to Portsmouth is needed to see how the great belly-laugh of forms is completely natural as Vanbrugh's fireworks at Blenheim. And behind the spontaneity there is an extremely skilful use of precast concrete units in different combinations: hence the scheme is a commercial proposition as well, in spite of the cornucopia of shapes. The only thing that has been squandered at Tricorn is imagination, anything else. This scheme was designed in 1962-63, so that what is just coming to completion in 1967 is equivalent to the style of the Beatles at the beginning of their national career. The Beatles opened a door which nobody can now ever nail shut: the Tricorn development might do the same of architecture's sniffy and status-laden establishment.... "

The Tricorn is featured in Nils Norman's new exhibition in the Aspex Gallery, Gunwharf Quays 'Ruins Monuments and Follies' until 20 July. The *Tricorn: The Life and Death of a Sixties Icon*, a book by Celia Clark and Robert Cook awaits Owen Luder's consent to publish his part of the story.

Celia Clark

## Poleitus!

The much heralded city-wide 20mph speed limit for residential streets has brought with it a plethora of new signage. Whilst much of it is dictated by Department for Transport guidelines, we do wonder whether we need all those new signs and poles in our pavements. David Baynes has managed to broker some reduction in Old Portsmouth, but a city-wide review is needed. Our streets need decluttering!

*Pictured tight: Poles at the entrance to Florence Road, Southsea.*



### The Portsmouth Society, Registered Charity no. 266116

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We welcome new members. Please come to any of our meetings or contact Jean Thompson for more details.