



## Lord Mayor unveils Design Awards Plaques



*Best new building award: Lord Mayor, Councillor Cheryl Buggy, Deputy Head Teacher James Munt, Architect Chris Greed and pupils at the unveiling of the plaque at Victory Primary School. Picture by John Holland.*

The Lord Mayor, Cllr Cheryl Buggy, joined local families and members at the unveiling of the plaques for the Portsmouth Society's Design Awards on Saturday 10 March.

Somerstown adventure playground was voted the winner of the best landscaping category for its innovative and eye-catching design. Architects from Portsmouth City Council's design group created the playground layout, and worked closely with local children, incorporating their ideas into the playground's design.

The party moved on to the winner of the Best re-use category, The Church of the Holy Spirit in Fawcett Road, where architect Tim Sage has inserted an unobtrusive single storey new hall, kitchen and meeting rooms into the west end of the church. The design enhances the church's soaring interior with its wonderful painted ceilings and fittings,

rebuilt in 1956-8 by famous Gothic architect Stephen Dykes-Bower after the interior was burnt out in WWII.

The final stop was to see the winner of the Best New Building award, Victory Primary School in Allaway Avenue, Paulsgrove. Designed by Chris Greed, Portsmouth City Council architect and built by Warings, it is an excellent and enjoyable response to a long narrow site, bounded by the M27 and the south coast railway line. The school's curved brick north wall gives it security from the street, while the informal wood-clad classrooms and breakout areas open off a meandering central corridor that belies its length.

We would like to congratulate all the winners and thank them for their kind hospitality on the day of the unveiling.

## **Visit to Littlehampton Saturday 16 June**

Our trip to Littlehampton will be hosted by the town's Civic Society and we will be travelling there by train. The day will commence with coffee and introduction at the 'Look and Sea Centre', a few minutes from the station. This will be followed by a walk along the riverside which has been redeveloped in recent years with interesting examples of modern residential architecture and new buildings to house the local maritime agencies and services. There will be opportunities to explore the town under the guidance of the Littlehampton Civic Society representatives especially the very successful, if startling, East Beach Cafe building along the promenade. Members will be able to return home on a train of their choice. Full joining details and an itinerary will be sent to everyone who books.

All enquiries to Hilary Reed Tel: 023 9286 5938, Email: [hilarysails@btinternet.com](mailto:hilarysails@btinternet.com),  
Address: 87 Ringwood Road, Southsea PO4 9JJ.

## **Can you help?**

Penny Hemsley writes ..

"I wonder if you could help me. I now live in Portsmouth and my mother often comes to visit. When she was a child, she used to visit Southsea with her parents (who are no longer with us), and they used to stay in a pub/hotel called the 'Fairy Queen' around 1939. We were just wondering if the building still exists and what it might be called today. We have driven around looking for a building she might recognise on numerous occasions but to no avail. It would be such a lovely surprise for her when she comes to visit in June."

If you can help Penny please email [mailbox@portsmouthsociety.org.uk](mailto:mailbox@portsmouthsociety.org.uk) or phone 02392 839660.

## Meetings and Events

Our regular meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month (not Jan/Aug/Sep) at the University's St. George's Building, St Thomas's Street, Old Portsmouth, PO1 2HY. Buses 5, 6, 23 & 700 pass the building which is a 5 minute walk from Portsmouth Harbour station. Free on-site parking is also available. Free admission. For the latest programme see [www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk)

	<b>Please note that our meeting scheduled for Wednesday 6 June has been cancelled in view of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.</b>
Saturday 16 June	<b>Visit to Littlehampton.</b> The Littlehampton Civic Society will be guiding us around their town's recently redeveloped riverside plus an opportunity to see the very successful East Beach cafe. Travel by train, lunch will be provided. For bookings contact Hilary Reed, email: <a href="mailto:hilarysails@btinternet.com">hilarysails@btinternet.com</a> Tel:023 9286 5938.
Saturday 23 June	<b>CIVIC DAY 2012.</b> Events across the country. See <a href="http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/civic-day">www.civicvoice.org.uk/campaigns/civic-day</a>
Wednesday 4 July 5.30pm	<b>Gunwharf Quays 10 years on - talk and walk.</b> Peter Emery, Gunwharf Quays centre director, will give a short talk on the history of Gunwharf and its plans for the future followed by a walk around the site. Meet at Gunwharf Quays Management Centre (opposite M&S).
Saturday 14 July, 10.30am onwards	<b>Architecture à la Café - Yellow Kite at Southsea Castle.</b> The third outing in our new venture will be to the Yellow Kite Café at Southsea Castle. We will hear from David Evans, Seafront Manager, about the creation of the café and the major restoration and refurbishment work recently carried out at the castle.
6-9 September	<b>Heritage Open Days.</b> Celebrate England's architecture and culture with free access to properties that are usually closed to the public or normally charge for admission. More at <a href="http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk">www.heritageopendays.org.uk</a> .
Wednesday 3 October 7.00pm	<b>October monthly meeting.</b> To be advised.
Wednesday 7 November 7.00pm	<b>Portsmouth Society Design Awards 2012.</b> An illustrated report from the judges of the recent Design Awards.
Wednesday 5 December 7.00pm	<b>How well do you know your city?</b> A light-hearted 5 quiz with Jackie Baynes.

<p>The Portsmouth Society, Registered Charity no. 266116          President: Dr Celia Clark. Vice-President: Dr Roger James          Chairman: Sue McClory, 329 Chatsworth Avenue, Cosham, PO6 2UW. Tel: 023 9242 8683          Secretary: Terry Carter, 15 Balliol Road, Portsmouth, PO2 7PP. Tel: 023 9269 9167          Email: <a href="mailto:mailbox@portsmouthsociety.org.uk">mailbox@portsmouthsociety.org.uk</a> Web: <a href="http://www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk">www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk</a>          Editor: John Holland, Design by 131 Design, Printed by Asher Print &amp; Design.          The views expressed in each article are not necessarily those of the Society.</p>	
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## Architecture à la Café



*Members and guests from Portchester and Fareham societies pose for a photograph at Fort Nelson at the first Architecture à la Café event. Picture by Jackie Baynes.*

In February, members and guests arrived for a morning at Fort Nelson, to check out the new Visitor Centre and re-vamp of the Fort's frontage - enjoying coffee and cakes in the cafe, before hearing about the project from the commercial manager and spending time in the excellent explanatory exhibition in one of the Fort barrack rooms.

At the end of March we were at the impressive new International Port Terminal. Apart from the Costa coffee, the highlight of an extremely interesting morning was the talk and tour of the building with its architect Roger Walsgrove of Halcrow. If you have not been there yet, it really is worth calling in next time you are passing through Mile End, (free short-term parking just beyond the main entrance doors).

**Don't miss our next Architecture a La Cafe on Saturday 14th July**, when we will be at the Southsea Castle Yellow Kite café from 10.30 to hear about the creation of the café and the major restoration and refurbishment work recently carried out at the castle.

### From the Chair

*David Baynes*

Hopefully by the time you read this newsletter, the April showers will be far behind us and we will be out and about in the sun again. I am pleased to report that at our recent AGM all the officers and committee members were returned for another year, and we also welcome Jayne Rodgers to the Executive who has agreed to become minute secretary.

### AGM

I would like to update you on the questions raised in Any Other Business from the floor of the AGM, which were discussed at our recent meeting of the Executive - the first

regarding our policy on visitors to the monthly meetings, aired briefly at the AGM where some members suggested charging, and others preferred no charge. Looking back through our records we average three guests per meeting, some of whom have since joined the society; some were visitors from other regions. The executive found that most visitors supported the raffle and coffee, so it was felt that for the immediate future guests would be able to continue to attend free of charge.

The second matter was with regard to the annual accounts item of expenditure 'unpaid cheque' £29.50; at the AGM I explained that a cheque had been rejected due to the account being closed, and on further investigation I find that this item relates to two cheques during the year, and the £29.50 is the bank charge relating to those cheques, which have since been settled. Therefore, this item should have read 'bank charges' and will be recorded as such in our accounts.

### **St Peters and St Luke's Churches**

Also at the AGM, I reported on St Peter's Theatre - During our recent visit to St Peter's and St Luke's Churches, following on from a talk about the 'Care of Church Buildings', we also took a quick look into the theatre. One of our members, William Dawson, is Chairman of the Campaign to save St Peter's Theatre, and he has kindly offered to show members round the venue. If you require further information please contact William on 023 9282 7017. The Campaign to save the theatre continues, and a meeting was held at Landport Community Centre 25 May. Further details are available on the website [www.stpeterstheatre/webs](http://www.stpeterstheatre/webs)

### **Fairs in May**

The Society attended the St Mary's Community May Fayre, in St Mary's Church on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> May 10am-4pm; and also the Portsmouth Summer Fair on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May in Victoria Park, 11am-5pm. Both events are supported by organisations, charities and groups from across the area, and provide a wide breadth of interest and entertainment.

### **Portsmouth Festivities launch**

I recently attended the press launch at the New Theatre Royal, for this year's Portsmouth Festivities entitled 'Great Expectations' – where the Portsmouth Military Wives' Choir gave their first public performance and Sheila Hancock gave a Dickensian recital. I met some old acquaintances and some new interesting people among the sponsors and the groups taking part in the Festivities, and was pleased to find people feeling good about Portsmouth. This should be a great summer season with the Cultural Olympic events too, with many activities for all to enjoy – let's hope the weather is kind

*Sue McClory, Chair*

## Planning matters

The society's planning group has been bolstered with the welcome addition of Deane Clark who joins the three-weekly meetings where we look at planning applications in the city. Other members are Hilary Reed, Robin Kay, Terry Halloran (the team's scribe) and John Holland.

Several people noticed that the **Sails of the South** were sporting illuminated advertisements for a local motor group and we asked the authorities whether this activity had planning approval (public advertisements usually need permission). Lo and behold, a new application appeared recently for the display of illuminated advertisements on the said structure which, we had believed was a piece of public art and not an advertising hoarding.

Residents in the Owen's Southsea conservation area are alarmed at the proposed conversion of a large family home at **19 Lennox Road** into four maisonettes with the loss of the garden (a rare commodity in this part of the city) to car parking. The society has objected on the grounds of over-development and loss of a family dwelling.

It's not all bad news as we are pleased to see the conversion the upper floors of a warehouse / factory into living accommodation in the city centre at **229-231 Commercial Road**. We have said for many years that a vibrant city centre should have a mix of uses including housing. Too many of our city centres are sterile and lifeless after the shops have closed.

On the St Mary's Hospital site, the buildings known as **Finchdean House** which were occupied by one of the NHS Trusts, are to be converted to form 39 flats with some new blocks to house 34 more units. This is the second time the application has been lodged, the first having been rejected following comments from the Design Review Panel. We felt that the design of the new blocks was unsympathetic with the attractive original buildings and we said the car parking should be away from the wide courtyard in front of the buildings. Whilst the new plans are better, the car parking remains for all to see, and the plans have not gone back to the review panel for their approval. The scheme was approved by the city council's planning committee on 23 May.



*Decoration of the windows at Finchdean House, St Mary's Hospital site. Picture by John Holland.*



*Recently demolished for a car park – The Resident Medical Officers' Quarters built by the city's Health Committee in 1936. Picture by John Holland.*

**Europa House** on Havant Street, Portsea, better known as the Pall Europe building, was vacated in March and will be converted to a Travelodge (a budget hotel) with 170 bedrooms. The new owners are Land Securities, owners of Gunwharf Quays, who will be able to use the 408 space car park as overflow for their retail and leisure centre. The building will be subject to external alterations including replacement of existing windows with one new window and two coloured class spandrel panels to each bay. The windows and panels will be irregularly spaced to create added visual interest and the whole building will receive measures to greatly improve energy efficiency. The plans were approved by the planning committee on 23 May.

The front of the former **Odeon Cinema** in London Road is to be converted to a Sainsbury's Local shop. Many have questioned the need for another convenience store but we are pleased that the iconic tower will not be demolished as proposed in the earlier plans for housing and shops on the site.

**Steel Shutters** are a necessary curse on our shopping streets and whilst they are fine when they are in the raised position but can make the street look very hostile when down. We do understand that they are often a requirement of insurance companies but they are available in a wide range of styles and colours. There are some excellent wood effect ones in Victoria Road South and the perforated variety allow some vision of what's behind the shutters, but the fact remains that all too many are the dull and lifeless solid galvanised steel variety. Remember that all new street-facing steel shutter installations need planning permission.

Portsmouth's version of **The Blade** – the proposed 300ft tower for student accommodation overlooking Victoria Park - has been delayed following the withdrawal of one of the key partners from the scheme. The site of the former Victoria Swimming Centre remains empty with unattractive blue hoardings fronting the park. Proposals for the former **Zurich Offices** in Stanhope Road remain in limbo, the building having remained empty for several years.

There is no news to report on the former **Savoy Court** and **Savoy Buildings** sites by South Parade Pier. It is likely we shall have an ugly gap on our seafront for some time to come. The site of another hastily demolished building, **Tower House** on St Helen's Parade opposite Canoe Lake remains empty and is for sale.

Meanwhile in Old Portsmouth, after many years of inactivity, works have taken place at the **The Point** where the IOW ferry maintenance buildings once stood. It is no coincidence that the planning permission for the site was about to expire. With some works having been carried-out, the developer has satisfied the condition that building must have started within 5 years and so the permission continues. We were alarmed to see that part of the **car park on the Camber** has been fenced-off without warning for boat storage. We are surprised that the high metal fencing does not need planning permission and we are concerned at the lack of public consultation.

And finally, planning approval has been given for Portsmouth City Council to create, as part of the ARTches Project, a café in the former night watchman's cabin in Broad Street. £100,000 of Government funding to develop seaside communities will allow the transformation of the building - an historic ancient monument.

*John Holland*

## Removal of VAT relief on alterations to listed buildings



Civic Voice is asking civic society members to join a sector wide campaign to ask the Government to reverse its proposed decision to remove "VAT relief on alterations to listed buildings". You can support this campaign by writing to your MP..

In the 2012 budget, the Chancellor proposed removing the zero rating of VAT on alterations to listed buildings and this decision has prompted huge interest from civic groups including Guildford, Hexham, Northenden and Newbury (to name a few).

Up to now approved alterations to listed buildings have been exempt from VAT. This means that projects that have "altered listed buildings" have not had to pay VAT on their work at 20%. A building is altered when its fabric, such as its walls, roof, internal

surfaces, floors, stairs, windows, doors, plumbing and wiring is changed in a meaningful way.

Civic Voice said "Sensitive alteration is often needed to secure a viable long-term use for many Listed Buildings. We fear that withdrawing VAT relief to these types of projects will be off-putting and many projects may not go ahead. Listed buildings are important as they contribute to the architectural heritage of an area, providing interest and variety to the street-scene and giving an important 'sense of place' to the locality. They play a very real role in promoting a sense of civic pride".

## Georgette, "Gigi" Norrish



Georgette, "Gigi" Norrish, long standing member of the Portsmouth Society, passed away on 9 May 2012 after suffering her third heart attack in the past 12 months.

Gigi, widow of the late Ken Norrish, former city architect of Portsmouth, had been living for the past few years in Birmingham, close to her daughter and five grandchildren, due to her failing health. She always maintained her pride, interest and commitment, however, to Portsmouth and was always keen to know what was happening in the city.

Gigi was very much a family centred woman and extremely proud of her children and her grandchildren to whom she was very close and who all loved her deeply. Her son, Pierre Dulaine, was the subject of the Hollywood film 'Take the Lead' in which the actor Antonio Banderas played his life. She will also be remembered for organising groups to the Dominion Theatre in London in the 1990's to see Grand Hotel in which Pierre had a leading role. Gigi had family all over the world and was the centre of their communications, holding them together.

Georgette led an eventful life and was badly injured in the Birmingham tornado in 2005 but this did not deter her from continuing to enjoy life in her own inimitable fashion. A modern unique, remarkable, talented and versatile woman whose generosity and creativity was well renowned with a wonderful sense of humour; she loved nothing more than spending time with her family and going out to lunch with them at least twice a week - she will be greatly missed by her family, friends and all who knew her.

## Trees Update



*Pupils from Highbury Primary School plant saplings in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Picture by Pauline Powell.*

Portsmouth and Southsea Tree Wardens donated 30 rowan and silver birch saplings to Highbury Primary School in Cosham to decorate their school grounds in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The trees were planted by pupils in April.

The Summer Fair and Picnic at Victoria Park proved itself to be a valuable recruiting ground as 12 potential Tree Wardens signed up! Pauline Powell led a tree identification walk around the park in the afternoon.

In our report in the last newsletter on the tree planting at Southsea common we should have mentioned that the major donor was local resident Malcolm Reeves and that the project had the help and support of the St. Jude's ward councillors, who made a contribution to the Portsmouth Tree Wardens fund from their discretionary budget allocations. Financial support also came from the Tree Council as well the other organisations involved in the planting.

### **Dates for your diary**

27 May, Woodland Tree Trail at Hilsea Lines 10am-12noon try out the new leaflet, meet at Bastion 3, Scott Road, off Peronne Road, Hilsea.

2 June: Picnic on the Green, St James Hospital Grounds, Milton. 2 - 5 pm, There will be a tree identification walk at 3pm.

30 June: Community Fayre at Admiral Lord Nelson School.

3 July: in Chichester Free Masons Hall, 7 South Pallant, City Tree Warden, Dr Brian Hopkins talks about trees and their origins and the contribution they make to City life.

More details at 01243 780192.

## **The Portsmouth Dialect – “Pompeyspeak”**

*We have had many contributions on the Portsmouth Dialect and the latest arrived this month from Alan West who writes:*

I've lived in Canada for over 30 years but grew up in the Chichester area of West Sussex. This evening I was explaining to my (Canadian) better half how I got the "scraze" on my elbow playing soccer this past weekend with a load of other old blokes when she asked me what a "scraze" was.

She'd never heard of the term. So I Googled it and found your 2002 article on Pompey speak and there it was: "I've scrazed me knee, miss."

My old mum, God bless her, was born in Pompey (where her dad ran a small dairy) in 1925 and lived there until WW2, so no doubt it's from her that I inherited the term.

A quick word on "mush" -- I don't think mush (as in "allo mush" or "woss your game then, mush?") is specific to Pompey, as one of your earlier correspondents implies. Certainly in the Chichester area the generation before mine used it (or its variant, "mushtie") and I've consequently said it my whole life. My dad always claimed it's a Romany word.

### **Open Plaques**

What have Cheltenham, Leeds, Blackpool and Birmingham societies all got in common? They are civic societies that are responsible for commemorative plaques schemes. Along with approximately another 70 civic groups, the civic movement is responsible for more commemorative plaques than anyone else. Now there is an opportunity to link up with others and have details of your plaques available to everyone.

Open Plaques is an online project begun in 2009 that aims to collate and share information about historical plaques and the people they commemorate. This year it opened up to public contributions and now lists details of over 5,300 plaques worldwide with upwards of 4,000 UK plaques included.

Members of the public can add information about plaques not yet included in their database - such as the plaque inscription, its location, who erected it, and who or what it commemorates - directly to the website. The plaque must have a link to the immediate location - general memorial plaques fall outside Open Plaques' remit. Photographs of plaques are pulled into the Open Plaques listings from two other websites - Flickr and Wikimedia Commons.

For more information about the project and contact details, visit the Web site <http://openplaques.org>.

# The Portsmouth Society – Membership Application & Renewal Form

To join the society or renew your membership then please complete this form.

Title: .....Initials: ..... Surname: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Tel: ..... Email Address: .....

## Type of Membership (Annual Rates) (please tick):

Full £10     Joint £15     Senior (over 60 yrs) £8

Student £5     Senior Couple (over 60 yrs) £10     Corporate £25

I enclose cash\* / cheque\* / postal.order\* for £..... payable to The Portsmouth Society  
(\*Please delete as necessary)

## Gift Aid Scheme

Are you a UK taxpayer? If so, every £1 you give could be worth £1.25 to us, helping to fund our work at no cost to you. All you need to do is tick this box.

I would like the tax to be reclaimed on any eligible donations or membership subscriptions that I have ever made or will make to the Portsmouth Society until further notice. I confirm that I pay an amount of UK income or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the Portsmouth Society will reclaim.

Please notify the charity if you

1. Want to cancel this declaration
2. Change your name or home address
3. No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

## Have you any special interests? Please tick.

Historic Buildings     Planning     Transport  
 Trees & Shrubs     Other

How did you hear of the Society? .....

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Data Protection: We will record only the details you supply on this form solely for administrative purposes. We will not pass this information to any third party without your prior written consent.

**Please send completed form together with remittance to:**

**The Membership Secretary, The Portsmouth Society, 31 Allenby Grove, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 9RP.**

Telephone 023 9232 7868 or email [eunice.conybeare@ntlworld.com](mailto:eunice.conybeare@ntlworld.com) for further information.