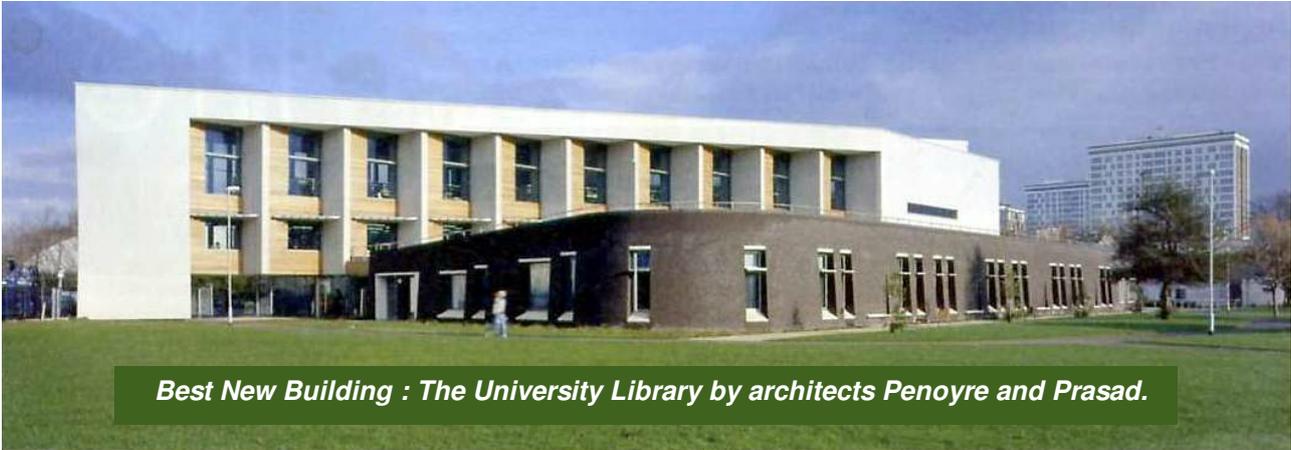


Portsmouth Society News

The Newsletter of The Portsmouth Society - Autumn 2007

DESIGN AWARDS 2007



Judging for the annual Design Awards took place in September and the winners are as follows:

Best New Building was the University Library; architects Penoyre and Prasad; client Ian Bonar, librarian; contractor Fitzpatrick Contractors Ltd; Structural design and mechanical design: Gifford; landscape design Jennifor Coe.

A **commendation** in the new building category was awarded to Bill Sargeant Crescent, a development of a small block of flats and a terrace of three houses for the Portsmouth Housing Association, off Church Road, Fratton, by the architect Roger Boyce.

Best re-use

There were two winners in the category of **Best Re-use of an existing building**. They were the Aspex Gallery in the Vulcan Building, Gunwharf. Director Joanne Bushnell, architect Glen Howell, and

Liquid - Envy night club in the former Connaught Drill Hall of the Territorial Army, which had been saved from demolition by the Society after listing had been secured by John Pike, the city's conservation officer.

A commendation in the re-use category was awarded to Casemate in Hilsea Lines, a casemate in the defence structure, re-used for band practice, with a specially designed sewage installation on recycling principles.

Landscaping

Best Landscaping Award went to the Blue Reef Aquarium garden and play area, Southsea Esplanade.

There was also a special one-off Developer's Award given to Neale Brickwood for his outstanding work in Hereford Road, Southsea, which did not fit into any of our categories. It consists of a small new-built house together with the refurbishment into blocks of small flats of three large late nineteenth century houses, all very well designed using fine materials and in some cases specially made furniture.

A full account of the buildings and landscapes judged will appear in the next Newsletter. RJ

In this edition .. Design Awards 2007, Meetings and events, Harbour cruise report, Hilsea Lido, Wymering Manor, World Heritage Site update, T.E.Owen sculpture, Commercial Rd/Edinburgh Rd public inquiry, PFC Stadium, Core Strategy - what's on the horizon for Portsmouth?

Meetings and Events

Meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month (not Jan//Aug/Sep) at the John Pounds Centre in Queen Street unless otherwise stated. There is no admission charge - all are welcome. For the latest programme see www.portsmouthsociety.org.uk .	
Wednesday 3rd October, 7.30pm	Spitbank Fort - Neale Brickwood, the current owner of the fort which lies in the Solent, will speak on its history and current use.
Wednesday 7th November, 7.30pm	David Williams , recently appointed Chief Executive of Portsmouth City Council, will speak about his role and his vision for our city.
Wednesday 5th December 7.30pm	Solent Waterfront Strategy - Martin Hendry of Adams Hendry Consultants will speak about the study they are undertaking to support development of the strategy which will help marine businesses gain greater access to waterfront facilities
Wednesday 6th February 2008, 7.30pm	Portsmouth Society Design Awards - Illustrated talk and discussion on the recent design awards.
Wednesday 6th March 7.30pm	Bill Gage, archivist for West Sussex County Council (to be confirmed)
Wednesday 2nd April 7.30pm	Annual General Meeting - plus Open Forum
Wednesday 7th May 7.30pm	Monthly meeting
Wednesday 5th June 7.30pm	Monthly meeting

Portsmouth Harbour Cruise - 'Different Perspectives'

At 4.30pm on 21st June the good ship Solent Cat left Gunwharf Quays with over 150 Society members, friends and guests on board, to view our city and neighbouring communities from the water. The trip proved to be an excellent and informative way to celebrate 'Architecture Week'.

Captain Peter had no hesitation in allowing our expert commentators Celia Clark (east shore) and Lesley Burton (west shore) the privilege of being on the bridge, where they both excelled themselves with a continual flow of information regarding the identity, occupancy, history and possible future of buildings and landmarks along both sides of the harbour. For many on board, not least Peter, it was good to be on a harbour trip which, for a change, did not focus on ships and harbour movements. Hopefully, Solent and Wightline Cruises will create an architectural option to add to their cruise itinerary!



'Ship's company' boarding the Solent Cat at Gunwharf

Many thanks to John Holland for setting-up the trip, Celia and Lesley for their research and commentaries and to Peter and his crew for ensuring a smooth and enjoyable trip.

We've now had bus tours and a boat trip - how about chartering a Chinook helicopter for next year's Society outing - anyone know the right contact in MOD circles?

David Baynes

Hilsea Lido

The City Council have decided that they cannot afford to keep the main pool at Hilsea Lido going after the date in 2009 when the new Olympic standard pool is opened at the Mountbatten Centre. The plans for closure do not apply to the paddling pool nor to the Blue Lagoon refreshment and meeting hall, which makes a profit.

At roughly monthly intervals a small die-hard group of us have been meeting to discuss the situation and plan for some way of keeping the pool going. When we met on 7 September we learnt from a council officer who had been that morning at a government-run meeting about the funding of the hand-over of public assets to voluntary groups. Public grants can be made available where firm plans including business plans are in place for reusing those public assets. The last date for coming up with such a plan will be mid November. The date seems unrealistic for us; but we agreed that we would try to get a group together well before then to make a bid.

We are advertising a public meeting, at the St Peter and St Paul Church Hall in Wymering Lane, on Wednesday 11 October, 7 till 9, to coincide with the already arranged meeting of the West Cosham Neighbourhood Forum. There will be another public meeting on Wednesday 24 October at the Blue Lagoon, Hilsea Lido, 7-9. The main purpose of these two meetings will be to get serious volunteers to come forward to work out a plan for the Lido and run it. We have a lot of information as to how other groups elsewhere in the country have managed to get similar lidos and pools going. Even if our bid for the government funding is hopelessly late or fails for any other reason we do need a group to take responsibility for the Lido and come up with a viable way of keeping this valuable asset in being or of providing some other outdoor swimming pool in the north of the city. Anybody with the time and determination please come to one or other of these meetings.

The Council have bowed out and it is now up to the public to get busy. RJ

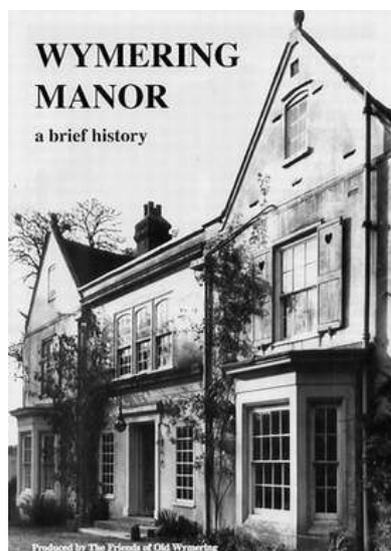
Wymering Manor

Over 500 people came along to the open days on 18/19 August - the last ones to be held before the main restoration programme commences in a few months time.

A new glossy 16-page A4 booklet all about the Manor is now available. It details its history and architecture, together with memories, stories and legends plus excellent photographs. It costs £2.75 (including postage) and is available, together with the current Friends of Old Wymering Newsletter and FOW joining form, by calling 02392 831461. FOW membership ensures you are kept up-to-date with progress with the creation of the hotel and you will learn about forthcoming FOW events.

If you would like to be involved with the archaeological volunteer team at Wymering, please call 02392 617260.

David Baynes



World Heritage Site update

Discussions are continuing in respect of the proposed Portsmouth Harbour bid. A symposium to present the case and facilitate assessment of all the implications will be held on Wednesday 16th January 2008 in Boathouse No. 6 in the Historic Dockyard. It is hoped that all the local authorities, plus heritage, architectural, environmental and tourism organisations, together with property owners and other interested groups and societies within the region will be represented. If you would like to receive full details of the event please call 02392 831461.

David Baynes

Thomas Ellis Owen Sculpture

Following the Thomas Ellis Owen bicentennial celebration in 2004, the Festival Committee persuaded the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to allow them to spend the residue of the funding on a sculpture designed to inspire interest in the life and work of Thomas Ellis Owen (TEO). It was intended to be a gift to Portsmouth. The sculptor chosen was the well-respected John Thomson who has a substantial body of public artwork both in the UK and elsewhere in Europe. In the spirit of goodwill so many people have shown towards the celebration of TEO's life, John agreed to provide the piece at cost price.



Artist's impression of the T E Owen sculpture at the Palmerston Road / Clarendon Road junction

Initially it was proposed that the artwork be situated at the northern end of the Palmerston Road shopping precinct where many visitors and shoppers might come across it. Gaining the necessary permissions and assurances to satisfy the stringent criteria set by the HLF took two years and, during that time, plans to refurbish Palmerston Road began. We informed PCC of our plans and, at a site meeting with the landscape architect, she too agreed the sculpture could be sited at the northern end of the precinct. A month after signing a contract with John Thomson, however, the Southsea Town Manager informed the Committee that it could not be sited in the precinct at all. Much was made of PCC's intention to consult the public. Later we were told a sculpture relating to Thomas Ellis Owen would not fit in with the planned 'Seaside' theme generated by that public consultation.

Following a difficult search for another suitable site we proposed the area outside, what is now, the Subway sandwich bar on the corner of Clarendon Road opposite Knight and Lee. Many pedestrians use that area, it is paved with an attractive circle of bricks surrounded by seating and would offer a spacious setting in which to show off the sculpture to best advantage. PCC apparently reject that site for reasons of cost: we have been told it would cost £5,000 to re-site the drain at the centre of the circular paving. Colas has kindly agreed to help install and to maintain the structure - a contribution which should more than make up for this additional expense.

The site favoured by PCC is the small strip of land between The Friary and the entrance / exit to Waitrose Car Park. Despite the obvious advantage of locating the sculpture near an Owen building, however, we feel this site is a very poor third best. Setting aside the clear disadvantages of siting anything next to the entrance or exit of a car park, PCC only has a small budget to carry out improvements and, given the mess the area is in at present, it seems unlikely it could be improved to such an extent that anyone would want to linger there, even if they did pass by.

Given PCC's emphasis on public consultation, we would now like to know what Portsmouth Society members think. If you have time and would like to help, please visit both sites and let us know your thoughts by contacting Sue Pike at 2 St Helen's Close, Southsea, PO4 0NN or on [pikectlive @ aol.com](mailto:pikectlive@aol.com).

Public Inquiry into the extinguishment of Vehicular rights at Commercial Road / Edinburgh Road.

In our last newsletter we reported on the public inquiry into the proposed closure of part of Edinburgh Road and part of Commercial Road to vehicular traffic. The reason for the order is so because the City Council wish to relocate the market from the northern part of Commercial Road to Edinburgh Road.

We have received the inspectors report, upheld by the minister, that the order be approved. This means that the part of the two roads, which are not open to all traffic but used by buses, taxis and bicycles, will become wholly pedestrianised.

The bus stops there will be moved to Stanhope Road, Edinburgh Road opposite St John's RC Cathedral and, in one case, Unicorn Road. There will also be a public performance space on Commercial Road outside Debenhams.

The decision seems to us very unsatisfactory, giving little weight to the cons and too much to the very weak pros, indeed at the inquiry the whilst there were several delegations opposing the scheme, no-one other than the City Council supported it.

In his report the inspector made it clear that he could consider only highway issues (and not planning ones) so he did not enter into the debate on where the market should be. We have said all along that the design for Northern Quarter, the new shopping area for the north of the City Centre, should include space for the market but, apparently, the profile of the market does not concur with that of a 'quality' retail area!

Straying from the strict highway issues, the inspector commented on the poorly maintained (and non-functioning) fountain in Commercial Road and questioned the ability of the city council to manage a performance area. On bus stops, he acknowledged that bus users would have further to walk between the stops and the city centre and that they would have to cross more trafficked roads although there is a long term plan for a bus interchange at Portsmouth and Southsea station. Northern Quarter, too, will have better bus access we are told.

Portsmouth FC Stadium for The Hard

Further to our article in the Summer 2007 newsletter, we have nothing new to report - it's all gone very quiet!

Core Strategy - What's on the horizon for Portsmouth?

The Core Strategy is the overarching policy document that sets the broad policy framework for all the other documents in the Local Development Framework. It plays a key part in the delivery of the council's community strategy, by setting out its spatial aspects and providing a long-term spatial vision. The first stage of consultation on the content took place in November and December 2006.

The next stage of consultation is in October and November 2007 and the City Council will be writing to all those who previously made comments.

Detailed information on the Core Strategy is available on the City Council's We site at www.portsmouth.gov.uk/living/7923.html or by contacting: Local Development Framework, Planning Services, Directorate of Environment and Transport, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2AU. Phone: (023) 9268 8633, Email: ldf@portsmouthcc.gov.uk.

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