



THE HIGH WYCOMBE SOCIETY

newsletter

NUMBER 93

AUTUMN 1994

PUBLIC INQUIRY JAM THIS NOVEMBER

The Society's resources will be fully stretched this coming November. The powers-that-be have decided to hold two important Public Inquiries and an Examination-in-Public, all due to commence in that one month. The Society hopes to be represented at all of them as important issues will be discussed at each, and vital decisions concerning the future of our town and its surrounding countryside will be made following each one.

Firstly, there are appeals by Mobil Oil Co Ltd and Shell UK Ltd against Wycombe District Council's refusal of permission to build Motorway Service Areas (MSAs) at Booker and Stokenchurch respectively. These will be heard at an Inquiry commencing on 15 November at the Council Offices of the South Oxfordshire

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the future of our town
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District Council at Crowmarsh, Wallingford. It is being held here as further appeals about MSA applications in South Oxfordshire will also be heard. Our interest is, of course, in the Booker application, to which we objected when it was first made some months ago. It is particularly annoying that the District is having to fight Mobil all over again. Their earlier application was decisively turned down after a Public

Inquiry in 1990, but because of a change in Government MSA requirements, Mobil are trying again. As our affiliated society, the Booker Common & Woods Protection Society has pointed out in the local press, all these Public Inquiries cost money and we, as Council Tax payers, are likely to have to pay the bill in increased tax. We support the Booker Society in calling for the costs of such inquiries to fall on the appellants. If any member has views on the Booker MSA application which they would like the Inspector to take into account, they should write, as soon as possible, to the Secretary of State, Room 12/16, Department of the Environment, Tollgate House, Houlton Street, Bristol BS2 9DJ quoting DOE appeal reference number: APP/K0425/A/94/237178.

Next, the applications by Messrs J Sainsbury PLC/Bunzl PLC and Messrs Safeway PLC to construct superstores with associated car parks at
continued on page 2

MARJORIE NASH

1904-1994

It is with great regret that we have to record the death on 24 August of Miss Marjorie Nash, a staunch supporter of the Society for many years and one of our Vice-Presidents. Frances Alexander, who has been a very supportive friend to Marjorie, has kindly written an appreciation of her life. See page 3.



...caring about our town and heritage

Registered Charity No. 257897

Honorary Secretary, John Gore, 30 Wordsworth Road, High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 2UR. Tel: (0494) 526671

FORGING LINKS WITH OTHER SOCIETIES

The High Wycombe Society has long been affiliated to the Civic Trust, an organisation dedicated to promoting high quality in the urban environment. However, until quite recently the links between our society and the Civic Trust have been little more than formal in nature.

This is now changing. As a civic society, we recognise that our aims are broadly similar to those of the Trust, and that any problems we encounter are likely to be shared by other societies in the region. We have therefore welcomed an initiative which will enable us both to take stock of events in neighbouring towns and to profit from their experience.

This initiative has been launched by the National Council of Civic Trust Societies. Last year, this Council invited all the local amenity societies in the North Thames region - roughly comprising Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and western Hertfordshire - to send a representative to discuss the formation of an association of local amenity

societies. Such an association had already been formed in the Midlands, and was running quite successfully.

Three meetings have now been held, and the Association of North Thames Amenity Societies (ANTAS) has been formed as a result. Membership is open to all civic and amenity societies in the area, and to date eleven societies have joined.

The objectives of ANTAS are as follows (I quote from the draft constitution):

- (1) To provide a forum for discussion on matters of common interest to member societies.
- (2) To support and assist individual member societies at all levels of local government.
- (3) To liaise with and make representations to Government departments, the Civic Trust, the National Council of Civic Trust Societies and other appropriate bodies on behalf of member societies.
- (4) To assist in areas where no society exists and to encourage the formation of local societies.
- (5) To promote awareness of and education in environmental matters in the area covered by the Association.

The Association will be officially inaugurated at a meeting on 5th November, probably in St Albans. Ian Morgan and Anthony Wethered, both of Marlow, have been elected Chairman and Executive Secretary respectively.

ANTAS will possibly be of more help to a struggling society in a smallish community than to a well established body such as ours. Nevertheless, High Wycombe can learn and benefit a great deal from pooling its experiences and problems with those of the other societies in the region.

Ian Guy

PUBLIC INQUIRY JAM

continued from front page

Wycombe Marsh and Temple End respectively will be subject to a Public Inquiry commencing on 29 November at the Wycombe District Council Offices. As mentioned in earlier Newsletters, we have views on these applications and we will need to develop our case ready for this Inquiry in the light of the latest Government Planning Policy Guidance which aims to improve the viability and vitality of town centres and to support sustainable development. This time, if any member has views which they would like the Inspector to consider, they should write to the Secretary of State, Room 124, Department of the Environment, Heron House, 49/53 Goldington Road, Bedford MK40 3LL quoting DOE appeal reference numbers: E1/K0425/2/3/06 and E1/K0425/2/3/09 for Sainsbury and Safeway respectively.

Finally, albeit chronologically first, the Examination-in-Public of the Bucks County Structure Plan 1991-2011 will commence on 1 November at Green Park, Aston Clinton. Arising from our comments on the draft plan, we have been invited to take part in the discussions on the distribution and phasing of housing provision, transport strategy and out-of-centre shopping developments.

We hope to be able to respond positively to all these challenges. What a pity the inquiries could not have been spread over a year instead of a month!

John Gore

'NO' TO HIGH HEAVENS TIP EXTENSION

Bucks County Council and Grundon's plans to double the size of the High Heavens' Wood tip at Booker bringing it up to the road and close to peoples' homes have been turned down by the Department of the Environment after a Public Inquiry held last year. This will be a great relief to the residents of Booker and Marlow Bottom, who would have been most affected. The Society joined our affiliated society, the Booker Common & Woods Protection Society, and others in opposing the plans on environmental and health grounds.

MARJORIE NASH

August 12th 1904 - August 24th 1994

Marjorie Nash was born in a house in Totteridge Lane, when it was still a lane. She was the only child of a children's nurse and an accountant. The family lived in various parts of High Wycombe throughout her childhood - Hughenden Road, from which she started her schooling at Priory Road School, Saffron Platt, and then Pinions, when she transferred to Spring Gardens School, and particularly enjoyed tending her flower bed there - the beginning of her love of gardens.

Marjorie trained as a teacher at Wycombe Technical College, and taught in schools in Slough, rising to Head Teacher.

The Workers Education Association was throughout Marjorie's life a source of joy and learning - the university education she would have liked. She continued her classes until the summer term this year.

Music was always a great love: a founder member and membership secretary of the High Wycombe Opera Society, she participated in every one of its productions in the chorus. She loved the Aldeburgh Festival, and attended every year even after her stroke. Two years ago, John Taverner, staying at the same hotel at Aldeburgh, found a rose by his breakfast plate - a token of Marjorie's love for his music.

Marjorie loved her home town, High Wycombe: the Rye, the Parish Church where music sounds at its most beautiful, Pinions where she has lived for the last eighty years. She took the changes in her stride, and welcomed particularly the Wycombe Swan and the Spring Gardens Arts Centre. She was greatly honoured when the High Wycombe Society made her a Vice-President.

She loved the countryside around High Wycombe, and would reminisce about past country walks with her parents, or friends she had known, when having lunch at the *Bull and Butcher* at Turville or the *Old Plow* at Speen.

Marjorie Nash never married, but cultivated friendships. In the past, she could call friends Dora Russell, Eric Gill and Ishbel MacDonald. School friends, WEA friends, Tunisian friends whose English she helped to perfect, Opera Society friends - all valued her friendship. Each birthday was marked by her party. Only twelve days before her death she thoroughly enjoyed the tuneful "Happy Birthday to you" with the cake and its 90 candles!

In May of this year, as a longstanding member, she wished to take part in the "Women Welcome Women" Gathering in High Wycombe; she attended and greatly enjoyed some of the events, and hosted two Romanian guests. Ilona Szasz wrote afterwards: "I will never forget our conversations with Marjorie, lasting well into the night. I learnt a lot from Marjorie, who corrected my English, and said that if I could stay with her for two months, she could help my English to become very good. She must have been a very good teacher, because she is a very good teacher today."

Marjorie Nash was grateful to all her friends for their continued friendship following her stroke in 1992, particularly to Clare Martens, her carer, who was with her when she died in her home, peacefully, on August 24th.

Frances Alexander

OUTING

CANAL BOAT TRIP, 2 JULY 1994

That this was meant to be a slow-down day, the perfect antidote to the bustle of the working week, became obvious when we boarded an old Routemaster bus for a dreamy, trundling journey to Kintbury. I particularly enjoyed passing through Reading, which, like many 'ordinary' towns has some glorious architecture.

Having arrived at Kintbury, we all climbed aboard the 'Kennet Valley', our boat for the day, which was to be pulled by Hannah, a black, glossy, feather-footed barge horse. I was a bit puzzled as to how a horse could pull such a weight, but, as our daughter Victoria explained to me, "Things are lighter on water, Mum", in a tone of voice which implied that everybody surely knows that. Well, no, Victoria, I didn't, but you'll have to excuse me - I'm only an adult!

We drifted lazily along this part of the Kennet

& Avon Canal, eating our picnic lunches, observing the passing scenery, and even summoning up the energy to disembark and walk along the tow path between the locks. And I thought about those navvies, who, a couple of centuries ago, had worked so hard digging out these waterways. What a pity the canals are not used more, commercially, today.

The boat was turned around just before Hungerford, and we began a tranquil journey back to Kintbury, where the Routemaster was waiting. It came as quite a surprise to realise that within a couple of hours we would have to resume life at a normal pace!

This was truly a lovely day out, and I'm sure you would like to join me, metaphorically, in thanking Ron Sims for organising it.

Denise Lindsay

PLANNING

WYCOMBE DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN: PUBLIC INQUIRY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

The report of Mr J I McPherson JP BSc DMS CEng MICE MIWE MIMgt, the Inspector who presided at last year's Public Inquiry into the deposit version of the Wycombe District Local Plan has been published. The Society's objections and comments were but a small fraction of the many dozens of submissions. What did the Inspector think of them?

On the subject of Areas of Special Restriction (Comm Valley etc) he did not agree with us that they should be protected by being put into the Green Belt. Instead, he backed Wycombe District Council who want to keep them as 'land banks' not to be built on before 2001. This gives a breathing space for second thoughts - much better than immediate building as some developers wanted.

On Green Space, the Inspector tended to agree with us that it was inappropriate in a policy purporting to protect green space to insert exceptions such as the building of sports changing rooms. However, he was not as

positive as we would have wished in ruling out all forms of development on our green spaces.

Our suggestion that there should be a larger element of housing in the Town Centre Action Area (Lily's Walk to Bridge Street) redevelopment was not fully supported by the Inspector. We still think our proposals would increase the vitality and viability of the town centre, as Government policy requires.

Finally, under Road Building, we asked for the deletion of the Northern Relief Road and the A404 extension along Hughenden Valley from the Proposals Map in the light of the Wycombe Transportation Study findings. The Inspector saw the sense of doing that as soon as it was feasible.

The Council is not obliged to accept all the Inspector's points. It will be interesting to see what their reaction is when they decide on 28 September.

John Gore

OCTOBER QUARTERLY MEETING

THE LANDMARK TRUST

"The Landmark Trust is a charity which saves good buildings from neglect or maltreatment and gives them a new life and purpose. So far we have rescued over two hundred buildings, and many of these we employ by letting them for holidays.

In this way a constant succession of different people can actually live, however briefly, in historic buildings of every age and style. By sleeping under its roof they profit far more from a place than by looking at it only; they can study it at leisure, be there late and early, in all lights and weathers, and get a feel of its surroundings. We believe that, by using our buildings thus, the maximum number of people derive the most benefit from them; and that many visitors who may come just for a holiday go home with some new interest aroused.

All our buildings are remarkable in some way – for their architectural quality, their history, or their situation. We have no favourite period or style, though we lean towards the humble and the functional. When fitting them out we do not make them luxurious or smart; they are simply put in good order and made as practical and comfortable as their nature allows."

So begins the leaflet published by The Landmark Trust to describe its purpose and activities. The leaflet goes on to describe some of their properties which are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the United Kingdom and the Channel Isles. They include castles, a gatehouse, a water tower, a medieval hall, and a whole hamlet in Cornwall. The Trust also maintains and administers Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel, where there are over 20 holiday cottages to rent.

It all sounds very exciting for a holiday with a difference. Details can be obtained from The Landmark Trust, Shottesbrooke, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 3SW Tel: 01628 825925, but, hold on a minute before phoning, we are having an illustrated talk about the Trust at our next Quarterly Meeting on Thursday 13 October at the Reggie Goves Centre at 8pm. Max Watters, the Trust's Buildings Manager, is coming along to speak to us, so you will be able to find out as much as you like from him. Question number one, I guess you are thinking, is 'How much does

it cost? Do come to get the answers, and bring a friend as well.

John Gore

DON'T FORGET

Don't forget the Society's meetings,
Bring a friend. There will be greetings
From Roger Lawson and John Gore,
Interesting talks and then, what's more
A cuppa and a friendly chat,
What about? Oh, this and that.

Look inside your new green card,
Barbara Rippington's worked so hard
To get speakers. So be fair,
Come to the meetings, take a chair.
You'll find the evenings are well spent,
Better than 'telly' that's evident.

If you've any suggestions, have your say,
Our Wycombe Society works that way.

Elsie Fowler

BRING AND BUY

Unwanted items/gifts (the "*Bring*" part) could become just what someone else needs/likes (the "*Buy*" part), and provide much needed funds to keep the Society active.

Like all other similar local organisations, we now have to pay the full price for our meetings at the Reggie Goves Centre, so we thought a Bring-and-Buy stall could be one way to help cover our costs, but it needs all our members to assist by bringing along those items which will make an interesting stall. You can suggest a suitable price, or leave it to the Committee.

So when you come to the 13 October meeting, please bring along something for the stall (and perhaps buy something to take its place?)

Ann Simone

Membership & Publicity Committee

ET CETERA

An old print of All Saints' Parish Church, High Wycombe, dating from 1848, shows a massive 'pew', called the Carrington Gallery, almost filling the chancel arch. It is, of course, no longer there. At a recent meeting of the 'Friends of All Saints', Lord Carrington explained the manner of its going. Apparently, a forebear of his, an earlier Lord Carrington, who was patron of the church, regularly went to the morning service. However, when the Vicar preached on the text "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." for three weeks in a row, the noble lord was furious. He thought, maybe correctly, that the Vicar was 'getting' at him for his supposed great wealth, so he thereupon ordered the Carrington Gallery to be removed and put in the stables of Wycombe Abbey. Lord Carrington did not tell us if he had the Vicar removed as well!

The Carrington Gallery is still in existence: it now forms the gallery in the main hall of Wycombe Abbey School.

ET CETERA – a column for members to contribute memories and snippets of interest about High Wycombe. Your contribution is invited!

*Coach outing to the
SIR HAROLD HILLIER GARDENS
AND ARBORETUM, nr Romsey
on Saturday 22 October 1994*

**There are still some seats available
for this trip, which costs £8=50
including guided tour. To book,
please contact Ron Sims on 440800.**

NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome the following new members:

*Mrs S Collington, Slayter Road,
Lane End
Mrs M A B Phillips, Littleworth Road,
Downley
Mrs E E L Smith, Plomer Green Lane,
Downley
Mr I R Snudden, Totteridge Road*

OBITUARY

*It is sad to report the deaths of the
following members, and we extend our
sympathy to their families and friends.*

*Mrs E F Brooks
Miss M Nash
Mr L K Watson*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 13 October 1994 8pm
Reggie Goves Centre

Quarterly Meeting: Max Watters, Buildings
Manager, will speak about *The Landmark Trust*

Saturday 22 October 1994

(see this page for details)

Coach outing to *Sir Harold Hillier Gardens and
Arboretum*, Hampshire, with guided tour. Picnic
or eat in restaurant. Book with Ron Sims on
01494 440800

Wednesday 18 January 1995
8pm Reggie Goves Centre

Quarterly Meeting: *An Area of Outstanding
Natural Beauty*: an illustrated lecture by Dennis
Lamb of the Chiltern Society

Thursday 6 April 1995

Annual General Meeting followed by speaker on
Extraction of Minerals

Saturday 29 April
– Sunday 28 May 1995

Wycombe Arts Festival

Saturday 3 June 1995 8am – 12.30pm
Little Market House

Charity Market Stall