



NEWSLETTER

**FRIENDS OF
CARSHALTON
WATER TOWER**

No.44, FEBRUARY 2010

WE do hope that you have enjoyed the snow rather than survived it and we also hope to give you wonderful news shortly of a major sponsor for the refurbishment of our Sham Bridge. You will see from our Programme of Events that we are going to have a small exhibition about Sham Bridges in the Orangery and Michael Symes will give us his excellent illustrated talk on Sham and Illusionist Garden Bridges at the end of May.

You will note that we have the old favourites listed throughout the year, such as the Heritage Quiz, which starts our programme in April, film shows, Beer, Bangers and Mash and our Christmas Soiree to brighten the winter months. However, we have a very full May, with the official unveiling of our beautiful new tile panels. The tiles, most generously given by the Daughters of the Cross of Liege, have been arranged to form two panels. This has been made possible by the sponsorship of the Mercers' Company and several Friends. Official invitation to our sponsors will go out nearer the date, but if you have not donated and feel that you would like to do so, however modestly, please contact Julia. There is a saying about acorns, I believe.

John Freeman has kindly offered to show his very popular Transport IV archive film programme again in the afternoon on Saturday 15 May. For the first time we are supporting Museums at Night and will open the Water Tower on Sunday evening, 16 May for tours. On 30 May Carshalton House will be open and we shall focus on our Sham Bridge with Michael's talk and our Sham Bridges Display. There will be an official unveiling of the Bridge once the restoration work is complete.

In June there are excellent incentives to attend the AGM as we are fortunate enough to have Andrew Skelton to talk to us about Monuments and Mausolea, with particular reference to Sir William Scawen's monument in Carshalton Parish Church, and of course a strawberry tea. At the end of October John Freeman will present a new show of archive films, Times Past VI, which will certainly bring back some amusing memories.

Throughout the year we are supporting local and national initiatives: the Wandle Festival, London Open Gardens & Squares, Festival of British Archaeology, national Heritage, and London Open House weekends, apart from Carshalton Arts Festival, the Environmental Fair and Carshalton Charter Fair, when its date is fixed. We do hope that you and your friends will enjoy our programme this year. Please come and support us as it is only with your support that the Friends can exist and continue the refurbishment of our wonderful buildings and landscape.

Obituary

It is with the greatest sadness that we report the extremely tragic accidental death of Philip Graves. From the day Philip joined the Friends he was a most enthusiastic supporter, always willing to help in any capacity but particularly with our Charter Fair stall and Raffles. His openness and friendship will continue to be deeply missed. Our thoughts are also with his sister and her family for their loss.

Fun at the Fairs!

Once again the Friends manned a stall (with the Carshalton Society) at the Environmental Fair on August Bank Holiday Monday. Jean and John and Liz Thornton did a wonderful job promoting us and advertising our events - this despite the wind, which at one point almost blew the gazebo away. Although little money is taken at this event it does heighten our profile and we did get more people for Beer, Bangers and Mash and our other events, so we will be back again this year.

It was the 750th anniversary of the Carshalton Charter Fair in 2009 and on 5 September we again took a stall. The Fair seems to get smaller each year but we still managed to take £50 from the goods we had to sell (mostly collected by Doris Freeman). The stall was manned by Julia, Simone and Philip, who also donated goods for sale. We promoted our coming events and spoke to many people who were unaware of our existence. In the afternoon the fun element increased with the arrival of Straw Jack and his followers.

Julia Gertz

Bunfight at the Water Tower Tearooms

As has already been said, the Water Tower participates in various wider events during the summer, amongst these a number of special weekends. One of the first is usually the London Open Squares and Gardens weekend, which arranges the opening to the public (not necessarily free) of private squares and gardens in and around London. Last year this brought us a number of visitors who had found us in the published list of locations open. The same is true of the national Heritage Open Days and particularly of Open House London, for which there is a widely-distributed booklet listing all the properties in Greater London open free on that weekend. The fact that these two weekends offer free admission means that we have to find another way of coaxing the pennies from the increased numbers of visitors, which is where the Water Tower Tearooms come in. Doris, Liz and Simone provided a tempting array of cakes and, with Julia and their helpers, gathered £26 from the visitors on the Heritage weekend and £202 from the Open House visitors. All a bit hectic, but clearly worth the effort. Who knows - some of them may return this year just for our Victoria Sponge!

John Thornton

Beer from an Oxfordshire Brewery for 2009 Bangers and Mash

Now part of the Marston's group, the Wychwood Brewery in Witney has a unique "myths and legends" style, and was chosen for the 2009 Beer, Bangers and Mash. The brewer is relatively new but continues the tradition of brewing in Witney which goes back to 1841 with Clinch's Brewery which was a successful family enterprise. In 1983, the original Clinch's Brewery site was purchased by Paddy Glenny, who christened it The Eagle Brewery; later changing this to the Glenny Brewery. In 1990, the Eagle was renamed the Wychwood Brewery after the ancient mediaeval Wychwood Forest which borders Witney. Wychwood was also committed to bringing back to Oxfordshire the brewing of Brakspear's beers. Following a one million pound redevelopment of the Wychwood Brewery site, the Brewery now incorporates a separate Brakspear brewhouse and Brakspear fermenting room, using much of the original Brakspear equipment from the closed Henley brewery.

Of the five beers obtained for the 2009 Beer Bangers and Mash beer tasting, four were Wychwood and one Brakspear. We started with WychCraft Blonde, followed by Circle Master, then Brakspear's Oxford Gold which was provided as the beer for the Bangers and Mash supper with its selection of Woodward's locally-made sausages, not forgetting the beans and onion gravy. After the supper we tasted Wychwood's Fiddler's Elbow followed by Hobgoblin - a dark beer claimed to be the fifth best selling bottled beer in the UK. All beers were well received by those attending with each having their own favourite. The evening also included a profitable raffle which included brewery tour tickets and a T-shirt from Wychwood, who we thank for their support.

We would also like thank all who attended and those who worked so hard, both before and on the night, at this successful and ever-popular event which raises funds the Water Tower.

John Freeman

"Times Past Transport IV" - Archive Films at the Tower in October 2009

The films for the latest Times Past Transport covered a period from the 1940s almost to the present day covering rail, road, air and sea. There were a number of films which recorded the end of an era. We started with a film which covered the early years of *London (Heathrow) Airport* including its building and first flights in the 1940s. In *Railways for Ever* John Betjeman looked at the last steam service run by British rail in 1968 and railway history in general. The film *Seaspeed Express* recorded the now withdrawn hovercraft services across the channel, the fastest service for passengers and cars before the Tunnel. To round off the first half of the programme, a film from the early 1950s, *The Elephant will Never Forget* took a nostalgic look at the last days of the London Trams.

The second half of the presentation started with *Zip Up the Met*, a short clip of a speeded-up journey on the Metropolitan Railway from Finchley Road to the end of the Chesham branch; followed by *Just the Ticket*, a film made by British Rail to promote travel by train in the 1960s. The next film was one of the cinemas' Look at Life series: *Scooter Commuter*, looking at the popularity of motor scooters in the early 1960s. The second half of the programme was also interleaved with short public information films with a transport theme, and ended with *QE2 - The Last Great Liner*, a compilation of material covering the building of this great British liner in the 1960s and its forty years of service, including its last journey from Southampton in December 2008.

If you missed this event in October last year or would like to see it again at a daytime showing, you will be welcome at the Tower on the afternoon of Saturday 15 May at 2.30pm. Entry is £3.50 per ticket with a cup of tea. A new Times Past VI with a wider look at life with films from the 1940s to 1960s is planned for the evening of Friday 29 October. Look out for further details.

John Freeman

The Christmas Soiree

'Tis the season to be jolly, fa-la-la-la-la, la-lal-lal-la! ... and much jollification was had at our Christmas Soiree on Friday 4 December.

Guests and Friends galloped musically to the tunes of *Hark, the Herald Angels sing, Silent Night, Ding dong merrily on high, The First Nowell* and *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. Enthusiastic choristers led us speedily to a breathless finale.

Liz, John and Simone delved into their bag of goodies to bring us a varied selection: sombre readings such as P.O.Ws at Christmas, Monica Dickens' experiences in a hospital in 1940 and Dr Opimian's irritation at Christmas bells contrasted with Dylan Thomas, Laurie Lee and Helen Crane, who gave us glimpses of Christmases in various eras. Our usual children's contribution came with Liz's reading of *Joseph* from a compilation by Alan Titchmarsh, and once more we offered a suggestion for the ideal present for Mother - a unique vacuum cleaner from *Good Housekeeping* magazine. Our final reading of a parody of *'Twas the Night before Christmas* brought the evening to a lighthearted end.

The tasty buffet and mulled wine were enjoyed by all and many bought items from the Christmas stall. Once more Doris's raffle was generously supported and made a tremendous £61.

Simone Guyonvarch

*Friends of Carshalton Water Tower: Secretary Julia Gertz, 136 West Street, Carshalton SM5 2NR
(The working Committee of the Carshalton Water Tower and Historic Garden Trust. Registered Charity No. 1086243)*

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