



**FRIENDS OF
CARSHALTON
WATER TOWER**

NEWSLETTER

No. 46, FEBRUARY 2011

We hope that you had the opportunity to see the Water Tower illuminated over the Christmas and New Year period looking as wonderful and seasonal as ever and, as tradition has it, your Committee has been devising 2011 's Programme of Events. We are again trying to support as many local and national heritage enterprises as possible and have our most popular events again on the programme.

As you will see from the enclosed Programme of Events, we start with the Friends' Quiz Night which is always great fun. Then early in May John Freeman will repeat his last autumn's archive film show in the afternoon for Friends and guests who prefer an afternoon event. In June we will support London Open Gardens & Squares again and Andrew Skelton will give a talk, after our AGM, about Charles Bridgeman's landscape garden at Briggens, for Robert Chester, with many references to our early 18th-century Bridgeman pleasure grounds for Sir John Fellowes. Both men were involved with the South Sea Company and this links well with our proposed display for the Orangery this year, titled 'Dodgy Bankers - Local 18th-century Money Men'. We are extremely fortunate to have this exhibition as a gift from Honeywood Museum. If you were unable to view it at Honeywood this will be a golden opportunity to see it and you will discover, if you had not already realised, that some banking practices have not changed after two centuries!

We hope to have a presence at the two fairs, Carshalton Charter Fair and the Environmental Fair. In summer we will support the Festival of British Archaeology and the two weekends, that of the National Heritage and Open House London. Our Beer, Bangers and Mash evening is on the programme again as it is always a sell out and there will be a new Times Past programme devised by John for us also in October. We are desperately hoping that the weather will not force us to cancel our Christmas Soiree this year as this is such a happy event to end the year. All our Volunteers who missed this Soiree will be personally invited to an event in April.

You will see that this last year we have not only restored our wonderful folly, the Sham Bridge, but we have a new terrace in front of the Saloon by the headrace, looking towards Carshalton House (St Philomena's School). We have also raised money to have the beautiful tiles from Carshalton House, possibly the dairy, most generously given to us by the Daughters of the Cross, mounted as two panels. A new door has been made and fitted to West Street and the drain pipes from the roof of the tower have been replaced. Sir John Fellowes' lion's missing mural crown, on the top of the east pier of the main gates to Carshalton House has been restored. These works would not have been possible without your support. The gardeners, under the direction of Tony Allen have also been very busy during our closed season. They have planted trees very kindly donated by John Freeman to replace some of the felled unsafe trees, and crocus bulbs donated by the Rotary Club, apart from clearing and generally tidying. We are hoping this year amongst other things to decorate the Robing Room, our kitchen and toilet area, and to carry out extensive repairs to the Hermitage under the direction of English Heritage.

We trust you will approve of your Committee's programme because it is with your support that we will be able to continue our exciting proposed building programme this year. Come to as many events as you possibly can with your friends and acquaintances and please can you remind people that the Water Tower can be hired and indeed the Hermitage, once it is restored. We would like you to visit us frequently on Sunday afternoons. Remember your visit will be free as a Friend or Volunteer.

Volunteers Needed

Soon we will be opening the Water Tower and garden to the general public, albeit later this year because of the lateness of Easter, and we do need help stewarding the Sunday afternoons. Training sessions will be given as your needs require. You will not be left to manage on your own as there are always at least two people on duty at any time. It is a very interesting way to meet people, to make new friends and to be supportive of our beautiful heritage. If you are not otherwise committed we would like to see you on a Sunday afternoon. However if you have other free time and would like to help you will be most welcome. Please contact Julia.

Sham Bridge Restoration

We had a splendid official unwrapping of the Sham Bridge on Saturday 28 August 2010. We were welcomed by the Chairman of the Trustees, Derek Yeo and, as the weather was particularly kind to us, we were able to meet in the lake bed area in front of this folly for the toast and talks. Michael Symes, a garden historian, lecturer, writer and one of our Trustees, gave an address informing us of the special historical context of our Sham Bridge which was extremely interesting. Tom Brake then explained what a fine example this restoration work was of local people coming together to make things happen. The celebration continued in the Water Tower with light refreshments, and our Patron, Mark Girouard, was [here to reminisce and give his support. We also had local Viridor Consultative Committee members attending, including Denis Philpott and his wife who have been great supporters of this project. It was a very pleasant affair, not only the special official unveiling day but the whole project. We had been successful in receiving £20,000 from Viridor Credits Environmental Company towards the project and the restoration, which was carried out to a very good standard, and had taken under a month to complete. A report on the project is available to read in the Water Tower, if you would like to have more detail.

Fairs

We had a limited presence at Carshalton Charter Fair, the date of which had been moved from its traditional time in early September to early July, in support of the Borough's 'Take Part - Take Pride' festival. However we did distribute numerous leaflets for our events and managed to heighten our profile. At the Environmental Fair in Carshalton Park we talked to a very large number of people. We believe that this has paid off as we had many more new faces at our Water Tower events than formerly. This was very rewarding.

Garden working party? Whoopee!

We are having a gardeners' working party on Saturday 9 April from 10.30 am but you do not have to be a gardener to help as there are numerous other jobs to be completed before our opening. A light lunch will be provided.

A Facelift for Honeywood Museum

Very excitingly our neighbours at Honeywood won their Heritage Lottery bid for extensive refurbishment to be carried out but unfortunately this work has not started yet. So the publicized projected reopening date of July seems a little too ambitious! However, although the building is closed, there are still heritage activities. The Carshalton Arts Festival organised by Jane Howard with Elizabeth Price's help will be held as usual, but with a slightly different format, and a special exhibition is proposed featuring the Carews at Beddington. The venue is to be decided. The Friends of Honeywood are also still very active. Please visit their website for details: www.friendsofhoneywood.co.uk/index.html.

And still they come

Each September the Heritage weekends seem to attract more visitors to the Water Tower: first the National one and, a week later. Open House London. This latter is particularly popular, the programme being well publicised all over the capital. No doubt the free admission also helps, but this of course means that on our busiest days of the year we can take no entrance money. However, we have a cunning plan! Once inside the Tower our visitors are subjected to temptation by the Ladies of the Tearoom - Julia, Doris, Simone and Elizabeth - who have ways of coaxing the money from their pockets and purses. Over the two weekends they made over £200, richly deserving our thanks and congratulations.

John Thornton

Micro Brewery Featured for Beer Bangers and Mash 2010

With help of one of our near neighbours, *The Hope* public house in West Street, Beer Bangers and Mash featured its first beers from a micro brewery; the Essex-based Maldon Brewing Co. Ltd. Brewing started there in November 2002, with a 2-barrel brew plant located in the Stable Brewery behind the Blue Boar hotel. The brewery also trades under the name Farmers Ales, which was the name on the five beers chosen for the night. Although there is not a long-term history here, the brewery have noted and followed recipes from past breweries from the Essex area.

The five bottled beers obtained for the 2010 Beer Bangers and Mash beer tasting were all bottle matured, so some care was needed in the pouring. Sorry if anybody got some sediment in their glass! The five Farmers Ales beers were tasted in the following order. Maldon Oyster Stout, Puck's Folly, with Farmers 1PA provided as the beer to drink with the Bangers and Mash supper. Again the locally made sausages were a selection from Woodward's, all served up with beans and onion gravy. After the food and a profitable raffle, which helps to support the upkeep of the Tower, the final beers were tasted, which were A Drop of Nelson's Blood and Farmer's Golden Boar.

All the beers were well received by those attending but a number had at the top of their list the final two beers for the night; A Drop of Nelson's Blood and Farmer's Golden Boar. However the surprise beer liked by many was Maldon Oyster Stout, containing real Maldon Oysters from the River Blackwater. For those who wish to try these beers and some other Farmers Ales, *The Hope* have a small selection. We would like thank all who attended, and those who worked so hard both before and on the night. It is with some regret that some who wished to attend left it too late to purchase tickets. For events at the Carshalton Water Tower, particularly where food is involved, numbers are limited so advanced booking and payment is recommended to avoid disappointment.

John Freeman

A Full House - 'Times Past Transport VI' Archive Films at the Tower in October 2010

It is with some satisfaction I report the best ever attendance at a Times Past documentary film showing. The Saloon at the Tower with 30 or so chairs to which others had to be added later resulted in around 40 people viewing the films from various sources dating from the 1940s to the 1960s looking at a changing Britain after the 1939-1945 War.

'The Downlands', a film on farming in the Southern downlands of England in 1947, 'Kentish Harvest' 1950, the growing and harvesting of hops in Kent, with a special look at the East London hop-pickers, 'Report on a River', a look at the future of the River Thames from source to estuary, as seen in 1961. In this first half of the programme there were three short newsreel excerpts from 1949 covering sick carthorses, a Flying boat landing on the Thames and the work to restore St Pauls Cathedral after the blitz.

In the second half of the programme there were four films interspersed with a number of commercial breaks - cinema film commercials from the early 1960s. 'Cyclist Special' from 1955 saw a bicycle club take a special day out by train from London to the Midlands countryside. The 1960 film 'A Letter for Wales' is a documentary film promoting Wales through the eyes and memories of a Welshman living in London. The final film of the evening was 'Coffee Bar' - a 'Look at Life' film tracing the history and activities of London's Coffee bars in the late 1950s.

If you missed the last October Times Past showing, or would like to see it again, or prefer a daytime showing, you will be welcome at the Tower on the Saturday afternoon of 7 May at 2.30pm. A new 'Times Past' event is being planned for the end of October 2011. Look out for further details.

A number of people have asked if we could show some of the earlier film material again. Most if this is 16mm sound film which is too expensive to convert commercially to video format but I am looking at doing this myself, to a level of picture quality suitable to put on a show at the Tower.

John Freeman

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(The working Committee of the Carshalton Water Tower and Historic Garden Trust. Registered Charily No. 1086243)

www.carshaltonwatertower.co.uk