



In the early years of the Swan Prep School for Boys, when it was housed in rooms in Rechabite House in Crane Street (from 1938-1954), the boys used the Choristers' Green in the Close as a sports field. This unusual scene is found in Jane Howells's history - see *page 14*.

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## **SALISBURY CIVIC SOCIETY**

PROTECTING OUR HERITAGE, SECURING OUR ENVIRONMENT,  
SHAPING OUR FUTURE

***To promote high standards of planning and architecture  
To educate in the architecture, history and geography of the area  
To secure the preservation, development and improvement of features of  
public interest within the former Salisbury District***

- The Salisbury Civic Society, which was founded in 1960 as the Salisbury & District Preservation Trust, is involved with the past, present and future of the City and its district. This generates a substantial amount of work which is carried out largely by the Development Committee.
- Its meetings are monthly. New planning applications are examined where they concern listed buildings or conservation areas. Other applications are also looked at where they have special relevance to the future of the city and district. The remit is both ancient and modern. Opinions are formed and comments made where appropriate by this committee the members of which are a mix of both lay and professionally qualified, including architects.
- The Society keeps its members well informed and arranges a very active social calendar. Interesting visits are arranged as well as an exceptional programme of lectures. There is also a scheme to install Society Blue Plaques which are prized by their recipients. All this is the responsibility of the General Purposes Committee.
- The Society's remit is broad so that complex wider issues can be addressed such as the Salisbury Vision, where the Society is represented on the Executive Board.
- The Society is a charity and there is no connection with or formal affiliation to any Local Authority. However the Society is frequently consulted by the Local Authority and has built up a respected working relationship.
- There is a prestigious Architectural Awards Competition, covering both Conservation and New Build with the Awards being presented each year at a New Year's party, traditionally in the Guildhall. Each year a person of distinction is invited to chair the judging panel.
- Members are kept informed through our website, by emails and this quarterly publication.
- The affairs of the Society are overseen by the Executive Committee. Committee lists are on the inside back page.

Contributions to this Quarterly on any relevant subject are welcomed by the Editor and will be acknowledged. Opinions expressed here are those of the contributors and not of the Society, unless attributed.

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***www.salisburycivicsociety.org.uk***

***E-mail: civic@salisburycivicsociety.org.uk***

*Illustrations in this issue:*

© Jane Howells, James Salman,  
Ron Millar, Charles Villiers.

## **PROGRAMME.**

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Meetings will be held at 6.30pm - doors open at 6pm - in the Sanctuary of the Methodist Church in St Edmund's Church Street unless otherwise stated. Details of visits and any changes will be notified on this page and on the Website.

### **Wednesday 18 June**

AGM followed by Lecture by David Andrews of Visit Wiltshire, 'The role of Visit Wiltshire' in attracting visitors to Salisbury & South Wiltshire.

### **Friday 25 July**

Mystery Visit.

Marguerite Scott's Mystery Visit; application form enclosed.

### **Late Summer / Early Autumn**

Visit to Houghton Lodge.

### **Thursday 11 to Saturday 13 September Historic Open Days**

This year's theme is "Hotels, Inns and their Chequers". Professional guides will conduct free morning one-hour tours, 10.30-11.30 am, and afternoon tours, 3-4 pm, on Thursday 11th, Friday 12th and Saturday 13th September 2014 in each of three chequers: Cross Keys, Antelope and White Hart. Booking essential. Free tickets and details of times and venues will be available at Salisbury Information Centre, Fish Row, from Friday 29th August. The tours will provide an opportunity to learn more about the rich and varied history, architecture and environment of some of Salisbury's inns, past and present.

### **Thursday 25 September**

Tom Beaumont Jones,

former professor of archaeology, Winchester University,  
'Clarendon – From Royal Palace to Georgian Mansion'

### **Thursday 13 November**

David Richards, Blue Badge Tourist Guide,

*'Religion, Politics & Witchcraft in 17C Salisbury': a brief look at the turbulent C17, these traumatic political and social changes are the backdrop to an examination of witchcraft in Salisbury.*

### **Tuesday 25 November**

Open Meeting in the Guildhall at 7.30pm.

### **Membership Secretary**

Mrs Stephanie Siddons Deighton, 17 Wyndham Road, Salisbury SP1 3AA, Tel. 01722- 502575, email address [stephaniedsd@gmail.com](mailto:stephaniedsd@gmail.com) has volunteered to take over as membership secretary from Marguerite Scott at the AGM on Wednesday 18 June 2014





Our President, Dame Rosemary Spencer recently unveiled the plaque below. It commemorates the shop above which the ram stands in the High Street. Here she is seen relaxing afterwards with the Chairman, Peter Dunbar.

**The wooden ram above dates from the shop's former use by Stonehenge Woollen Industries, set up in the early C20th by Catherine Lovibond, with the aim of regenerating the rural economy. The firm continued in business till 1959.**

Ram renewed in 2013 by  **Salisbury Civic Society**



## SAINSBURY STORE IN THE SOUTHAMPTON ROAD

The Society's Development Committee had little difficulty in deciding that the current application for a Sainsbury store in the Southampton Road had no more merit than the previous one in 2012 (which was withdrawn). The Society has therefore put in a letter of objection, which repeats the points made in its 2012 letter where they remain relevant. The chief difference in the proposals, from the Society's viewpoint, is that the earlier scheme made grand claims for improvements to the route between the site of the store and the College roundabout, based on removal of the central barrier. It turned out this did not meet the approval of the Highways Agency, and is therefore omitted from the current scheme. This has meant one or two changes to the 2012 letter, but has not weakened its force, since all the Society did in regard to the omitted road measures was to express scepticism as to whether they were likely to achieve what was claimed for them. The Society's opposition, then as now, is based on more fundamental considerations about the principle of the scheme. The actual design of the proposed store has hardly been looked at – no amount of dressing up is going to turn this particular sow's ear into anything which even scrapes into the silk purse category. Here is the text of the letter:

Planning Department, Wiltshire South  
Wiltshire Council  
Salisbury

**F.a.o Stephen Llewellyn**

Dear Mr Llewellyn,

### **14/03690 – Proposed Sainsbury store, Southampton Road, Salisbury – Response by Salisbury Civic Society**

The Salisbury Civic Society's Development Committee, which determines the Society's stance on planning proposals, has considered the Southampton Road application at some length, and has agreed that it has little to commend it. The Society therefore wishes to **object to the application**, on the following grounds:

**1. Relationship to proposed Maltings redevelopment.** A retail-led, mixed use redevelopment of the Maltings/central car park area is a key component of local planning policy, referred to at some length and in some detail in both the adopted South Wilts Core Strategy and in the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy. The Society has seen no reason to object to this proposal, at any stage of the various consultation phases

on both strategies. It is also a key element within the Salisbury Vision, whose broad themes the Society has accepted. There is a need, clearly stated in the Core Strategies and elsewhere, for this redevelopment to complement existing retail facilities in the city's traditional shopping district, and not to challenge them. The addition of further large-scale retail space on the eastern edge of the city, which is not included in either of the Core Strategies, will inevitably have an impact on retail facilities elsewhere in the city, and cannot be considered in isolation. The Society believes that the Southampton Road proposals are, potentially if not actually, in conflict with the Maltings redevelopment, and are therefore not acceptable.

The primacy of town centre retail uses, as against edge of town ones, is also clearly stated in the National Planning Policy Framework. This sets out requirements for proposals such as the Southampton Road ones to establish that they do not challenge established town centre shopping areas, and the Society does not believe that these requirements have been met.

**2. Siting of new edge of town store.** Even if a need for edge of town retail space could be identified, now or in the future, the Society fails to see the logic of adding a large supermarket very close to the only such stores with an existing edge of town site (Tesco and Lidl), rather than siting it on one of the other approaches to the city. The Society believes that retail developments should be considered in the context of seeking traffic reduction wherever possible, a requirement not in any way met by this proposed concentration of supermarkets in one place.

**3. Impact on eastern approaches to Salisbury.** The visually degraded character of the Southampton Road entrance to the city is widely accepted as a negative factor, and the Salisbury Vision contains a broad aspiration for its improvement, though this has not yet been taken up as a project. The current application claims to 'provide benefits to the site and wider context', and to 'increase the vitality and viability of the surrounding area, along with creating an enhanced approach to the historic core of the city', but is necessarily limited by the fact that the applicants control only a small area of land. Visually, the changes they put forward amount to changes to the road layout immediately adjacent to the proposed new store, and the addition of a large new building, together with car parking and other facilities, on a currently open site with views across the watermeadows. The new building lacks the architectural distinction which alone might begin to justify pushing Salisbury's urban sprawl even further eastwards. The claimed benefits to the site and its wider context are very difficult to identify in the proposals.

**4. Landscape Impact.** The area in which the site is located is clearly identified as one of sensitivity in landscape terms in the supporting evidence for the S Wiltshire Core Strategy, and also the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy. Specifically, this evidence is contained within the Salisbury District Landscape Character Assessment, and the complementary Settlement Setting Assessment. The latter identifies 'the locally distinctive character inherently associated with the water meadows, which strongly contributes to the setting and special character of Salisbury and its historic core' and the need to 'conserve the strongly rural character [south of the A36] and associated strong sense of tranquillity'. The proposed development would simply extend the existing urbanisation of the Avon valley on the S side of the A36 further eastwards, well beyond the present 'gateway' formed by the Southampton Road/Bourne Way roundabout. Currently, the opportunity exists to create an attractive and natural gateway introduction to the setting of Salisbury. This would be lost if the current proposals were approved.

**5. Implications for future projects involving the eastern approaches.** While making broad claims about an ability to encompass wider improvements, this is in essence a commercial project focusing on achieving financial returns from a highly visible 24 acre site, considered in isolation from other land around it. The Salisbury Vision includes aspirations for this gateway area, but any future project, which may be able to take a wider view of the best options for this key entrance to the city, will find this site locked into a new use for the foreseeable future, thus precluding a more imaginative treatment of it. This is not an approach to planning which the Society views as appropriate.

Overall, therefore, the Society is **strongly opposed** to the proposals contained within this application, which it sees as lacking any genuine justification, and as potentially damaging to the long-term commercial health of the city centre.

Yours Sincerely

Judith Payne

Chairman, Development Committee

For and on behalf of **Salisbury Civic Society.**

***We welcome new members .....***

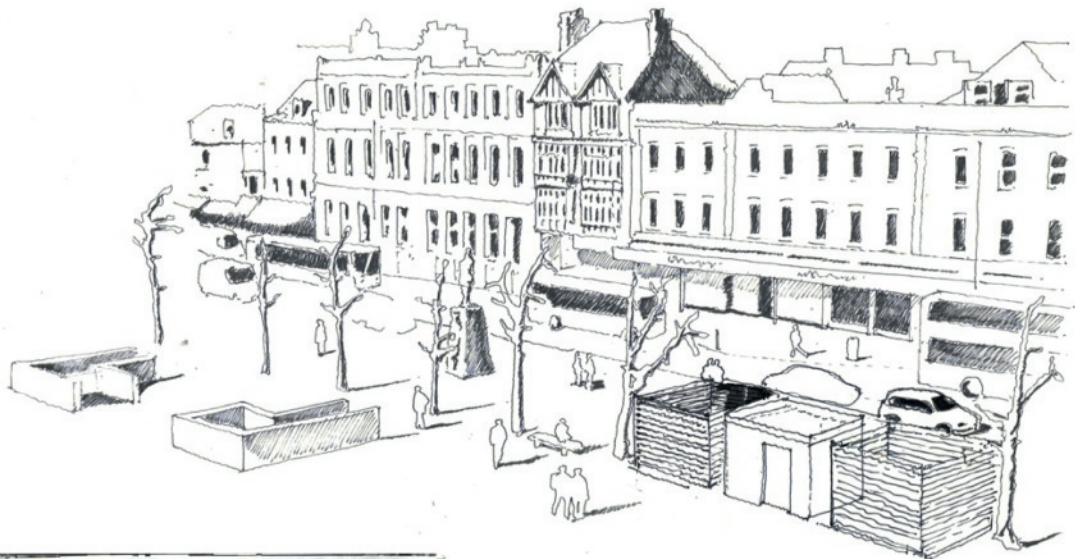
Mrs Heather Carpenter, Mr Colin & Mrs Edith Colston, Mrs Sarah Credland, Mrs Rosemary Dover, Miss Alison Stott, Ms Catherine Thomas.



**Salisbury Market Place** The Development Committee's monthly agenda has had the Market Place on it for a number of years now. This started as an appraisal of the Vision project to improve the space, moved on to consider the resultant planning application, and then in the wake of that application's tree-engendered withdrawal continued as an opportunity to hear about the alternative proposals that followed. Once work actually started (and credit is due to those who persisted with a project which might simply have been abandoned after all the tree hoo-ha), the agenda item has remained to give a chance to review the physical changes that followed. The general assessment has been that the resurfacing work has been very successful, but that some flaws remain. Of these, the bin store issue has been by far the most worrying.

In the original Vision scheme, there would have been two new stone-clad buildings on the Blue Boar Row edge of the Market Place, one to house bins and one shared between bin storage and a disabled lavatory. The Society expressed a strong view that the extremely mundane design of these buildings was a missed opportunity, and supplied a range of images showing similar structures built elsewhere with a great deal more imagination, but this had no impact on the application proposals. Following their withdrawal, the alternative scheme kept just one building, slightly further into the Market Place and smaller, to house just the disabled lavatory. The bins were not now to be hidden out of site, but to be kept in bays formed by additional stone walling to the above-ground structures around the steps down to the main subterranean public lavatories.

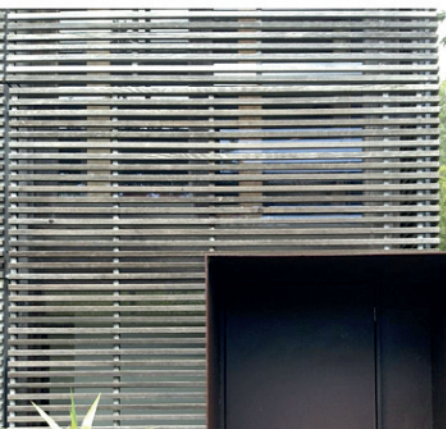
With the post-Vision scheme deliberately kept to changes which did not actually require planning consent (most of the Vision scheme didn't need consent either, but it was felt sensible to include all of it in the application), there was no formal consultation on the design that was finally implemented, and one way or another the bin arrangement does not seem to have been properly scrutinised. The outcome has been generally agreed to have been disastrous. The standard British bin in question (mostly council-supplied, though commercial operators also use the bays) is higher than the walls, so the tops of the bins are visible from any angle. And the ends of the bays are open, so that from many angles the bins are completely visible. Add to this a general laxity in how they're used, with lids sometimes propped open by over-filling, and bags, cardboard and other litter often piled up in the open next to the bins, and the effect is one of gradations of eyesore. Look north-eastwards from the western end of Blue Boar Row, and you have a nicely resurfaced Market Place, our superb Guildhall on the far side of it – and in the middle of the view, nasty plastic bins in a range of unattractive colours, on bad days surrounded by overflows of festering rubbish. Not market rubbish, incidentally – market traders have an alternative arrangement, and the bins are just for businesses round the edge of the Market Place. Theoretically there are regulations which should prevent the worst scenes, but enforcement resources are limited.



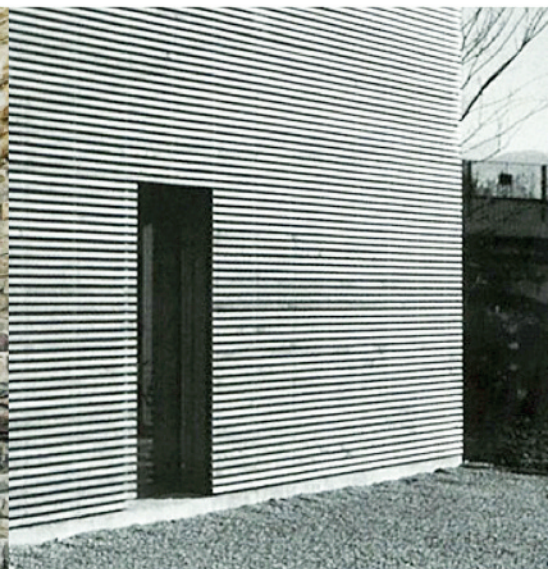
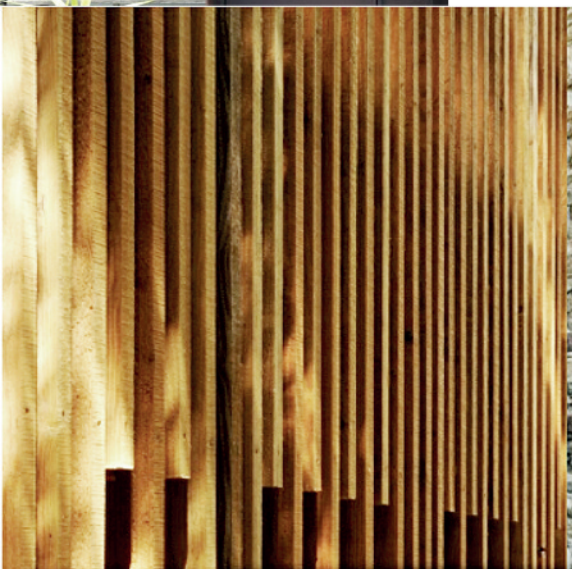
The Society is variously concerned about detail in the new Market Place and has made specific suggestions regarding the rubbish bins and their housing - see page 10.

**Option 2 - Illustrated**

Bin Store Proposal  
Salisbury Market Place  
Not To Scale  
30.04.14 - JS



These illustrations show James Salman's solution, with some alternative versions of a light wooden surround.



The Society's complaint to Wiltshire Council, which is responsible for the bin stores, that this was not an acceptable situation was not met by any attempt to defend it – others were already making the point that something had to be done. The Society was asked to put its suggestions in as to how things could be improved, which it did on two fronts. One was the obvious one of finding ways of hiding the bins in the current location, by raising the walls and filling in the ends of the bays. On this front the Society is unlikely to have said anything which had not already occurred to the council. Its other tactic was to put in imaginative suggestions produced by architect committee member James Salman, who proposed relocating the bins to somewhere close to the disabled lavatory building, and shielding them with a lightweight open-topped structure, which could be created without needing major work for foundations, and which could be clad in a variety of materials. Perforated metal could add a contemporary touch, and create something with a welcome element of zip in the rather staid new Market Place environment, but in practice a safer option of timber cladding, either vertically or horizontally aligned, would be the likelier finish. The existing stone bays would be rendered redundant by the move, but rather than simply demolishing them, it should be possible to find imaginative new uses for them.

The likeliest outcome is no doubt that the bins will stay where they are, and rendered less obtrusive. We don't know how much money is available for improvements, and moving the bins will probably be seen as too major a change. But at least the Society has had its say. Other aspects of the Market Place work will be commented on in the future – new trees are inadequately protected, and the new litter bins are just standard 'black with a bit of gilding to give a sort of heritagey effect' objects, which the council seems to use everywhere, painfully inappropriate next to the reasonably contemporary new seating. A suggestion by the committee that the improved space lacked a bit of pizzazz, and that something in the way of public art (interpreted in the widest possible sense of the term) would be a good addition, was met with the news that items of public art, combined with provision of heritage information, were due to be installed before the end of May. No public consultation has taken place, no pictures of what is intended are available, and we can only wait to find out what they look like. By the time this Quarterly is distributed, May will have ended and the works may indeed be in place, but at the time of writing they remain a complete mystery. We must hope for the best.

**51 High Street Sheep** The December Quarterly included coverage of the new timber sheep above the shopfront to 51 High Street, supplied by the Society. The animal has unfortunately proved to be not entirely weatherproof, causing problems which mean it will need taking down again, and further treatment given to its coating. The exact timing for this is not yet known.

*Richard Deane.*



**A.G.M.** This will be held at the Methodist Church, St Edmund's Church Street on 18th June 2014 commencing at 6.45pm. The formal proceedings will include re-election of officers and a welcome to Stephanie Siddons-Deighton who will take over from Marguerite Scott as Membership Secretary. I would like to record my thanks to Marguerite for standing in for this office.

We now urgently seek a nomination for the office of Treasurer and please consider if you, or another known to you, might be interested in taking over from Ron Millar who has been giving valuable service to the Society for over 16 years. Ron will give guidance to his replacement as long as necessary. New members of the Society are also sought so do please encourage your friends with this idea of joining.

**A.G.M. LECTURE.** We are very lucky to have a lecture this year by David Andrews of 'Visit Wiltshire' title "The Role of 'Visit Wiltshire' in attracting visitors to Salisbury and South Wiltshire". His experiences will give an insight into the who, why and when the visitors arrive to witness this splendid historic city. His feedback to us from client accounts will be most interesting I am sure.

**SALISBURY VISION BOARD.** I am able to report that a new Chairman has taken office, namely Alex Tregallas who has been connected to the Salisbury area for almost forty years. His professional background is in the international oil industry with experience in technical, operations and change management roles. He chaired his first meeting of the Vision Board on 28th April and in the Minutes it is reported that "it was agreed that Alex Tregallas and Richard Walters (Wiltshire Council) would collectively develop proposals for a new approach for the Vision Board consistent with planning for and delivering "transformative, ambitious and holistic outcomes for Salisbury". I will report further on this and priorities for the Vision projects generally after the next Board meeting.

**SOUTHAMPTON ROAD PLANNING APPLICATION.** Both the Salisbury Civic Society and the Vision Board have written to record their strong objections to the proposals under Application No 14/03690. As well as the inappropriate congestion caused by a Sainsbury Superstore adjoining the Tesco roundabout, the blight on the natural environment and block on improving this gateway to Salisbury from the south, is to be deplored.

**MARKET PLACE.** The unsightly refuse bins and sometime accumulations of loose rubbish adjacent to the public lavatories continue to mar the otherwise impressive renewal of the surface to Market Place. Both public outcry and letters, including one from the Civic Society have drawn undertakings from Wiltshire Council to examine 'improvements' to this situation: we await details.

**CONCLUSION.** The City of Salisbury attracts the attention of many visitors and residents, all of whom are concerned that good standards of architecture, husbandry and facilities are maintained. We, in the Civic Society, play our role in this process and I thank all who support and lead our various endeavours towards our objectives. I look forward to seeing you all at the A.G.M. on 18th June 2014.

*Peter Dunbar.*

## **SALISBURY CIVIC SOCIETY - ANNUAL REPORT 2013**

### **Chairman's Introduction**

This year has seen Salisbury, South Wiltshire and the wider economy revive to give more confidence that the levels of investment in our local built environment will increase over the next few years.

Thus, we in the Civic Society will remain diligent in our scrutiny of Planning Applications and Development Proposals as they are submitted and comment if necessary. The retail scene is particularly prominent with proposals coming forward for new stores by Sainsbury's on the Southampton Road, Asda by the Hampton Park roundabout and a new Aldi store on the London Road, on the site of the disused car showrooms, once occupied by an Audi dealership.

With such a growth plan on edge of town retail activity, one is bound to wonder if this will harm the economic success of retailers in central Salisbury and most importantly, the viability of the Central Car Park development plans.

The latter proposals have yet to be illustrated in detailed form by Stanhope, who gave a positive commitment at a public meeting of the Area Board in March and with a promise of more detail to follow in the autumn. The relocation of the Library appears to be a key step towards progress.

It is our hope that the Civic Society will have proposals to review in more detail later in the year and meanwhile we have objected to the Sainsbury's store proposal, as have the Vision Board, but broadly welcome the Asda ideas for retail north of the City, subject to good designs being adopted and yet to be seen. The Aldi scheme has yet to be revealed but if traffic and highways engineering can be satisfactorily dealt with, the development of this long disused eyesore will be welcomed.

Our Development Committee and the General Purposes Committee members work tirelessly to give the Society interesting lectures, visits and other events which are described in detail below by the respective Chairs in their reports.

Our Annual Awards Ceremony and New Year Party in January was very well attended and successful event held at the Guildhall. Next year's Awards will be for Conservation Projects and we are lucky to have many nominations for the Judging Panel to review in the autumn. The Chairman of the Judging Panel this year will be Jonathan Meades of BBC and journalistic fame.

We look forward to enjoying an active summer of events around Salisbury with its splendid new Market Place, all building up towards next year and the celebrations of the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta.

*Peter Dunbar.*

### **Annual Report 2013 – Development Committee (by Richard Deane)**

**1. Applications.** Changes in Wiltshire Council's planning application system during the year make it difficult to calculate how many applications were submitted in the old Salisbury District Council area, which remains as the Society's geographical remit, but as in the past few years there will probably have been around 2000. What can be said with more certainty is that 352 of these applications were selected for examination, resulting in 43 letters of objection or comment being sent in by the Society, again in line with recent years.

**2. Tesco, Castle Street, Salisbury.** One of the most significant applications dealt with during the year was that covering the rebuilding of the city centre Tesco, which will involve a redesigned store and a hotel above its rear, facing the Maltings. After an initial meeting between the committee chairman

and secretary and members of the project team, a considerable amount of committee time was spent considering the subsequent exhibition of the scheme, the application, and then significant revisions to the application. The first proposal, with a long monolithic elevation along Castle Street, was viewed with a certain amount of alarm, which abated considerably after a change in approach. This saw the retention of surviving early C19th facades above the store at its S end, and a much shorter stretch of the new elevational treatment to the N. Given the functional clash inevitably caused by a supermarket being fitted into a historic context based on much smaller units, the revised scheme was felt to be about as good as could be hoped for. The Society's main concerns focused on the treatment of the Maltings side of the store, not so much in terms of the actual building, but because of a perceived failure to properly deal with public realm issues. A very important riverside route for pedestrians and cyclists runs past this side of the store, and the application failed to make the most of this. It was also unclear how it would tie in with the forthcoming redevelopment of the whole Maltings area, with the planning system not able to prevent a scheme for one part of the area being worked up and decided on prior to design work starting on the rest of it. This lack of an integrated approach is highly unfortunate, though it is likely to be a year or two before the consequences of it can be properly assessed. On the Maltings project itself, little new information emerged during the year.

**3. Medical Centre, Avon Approach.** Another important application, this time as much for what it says about how much, or little, the local planning system is able to achieve, as for the specific building concerned. The Society was obviously in favour of this new GP surgery building in terms of its function, but did not see this as any reason for accepting indifferent design in a prominent location. It therefore objected to what it saw as an insufficiently thought-out application, which was nevertheless readily approved. What made things a great deal worse was the fact that as subsequently constructed, the most prominent part of the building, a forward jutting 'extension' feature deliberately designed to have a different character to the main block, did not actually look as it was supposed to look. Instead of the reasonably slender fascia forming the outer edge of its roof, as shown in the approved drawings, it actually has a startlingly crude and lumpen detail, which owes nothing to historic precedent or any tenet of good design. The planners, having apparently been told by the applicants that this had turned out to be the only way the roof could be built, seemed completely disinclined to seek any sort of alleviation, which might have been possible had the will existed. They eventually, possibly because of pressure from the Society, asked for a retrospective application covering the change of detail, but there was never any chance of this being refused. So the new building stands, markedly worse than the already indifferent design it started out from, just over the river from what is hoped to be a high-class redevelopment of the central car park, and not a very encouraging indicator of the level of quality which Salisbury seeks to achieve, or finds acceptable.



**4. Traffic in the City Centre.** By the start of 2013 it had become clear that the Society's policy of seeking the pedestrianisation of Minster Street and Silver Street was no longer realistic. This depended on an alternative route through the Maltings, to link Fisherton Street and Castle Street, and such a route was not compatible with such detail as had been revealed about the format of the new Maltings. The decision was therefore taken to amend this policy from one of pedestrianisation to one of shared space, a concept which has been gaining strength in recent years and which was the focus of an exceptionally successful Open Meeting (for which see below). During the second part of the year the Society became involved in an exercise, promoted by the Salisbury Vision, to produce traffic-related ideas as an aid to the formulation of Wiltshire Council policy, with three task groups set up. The Society was represented on the one on the public realm, and one of its most important resolutions was to support a similar shift from pedestrianisation to shared space for Blue Boar Row. Pedestrianising that street had long been Society policy, restated more than once during the long debate about how to treat the Market Place, but here too the Society took the decision to accept that realistically shared space was the option that had the best chance of actually being implemented. By the end of the year there were indications that funding for it in Blue Boar Row might be achievable, but the chances of a strategic approach by the council to all aspects of city centre traffic remained fairly slim.

#### **5. Planning Forum and Open Meeting.**

The February Planning Forum looked at various aspects of open spaces and the public realm in Salisbury, including parks and gardens, landscape issues and public art. In November the Open Meeting was devoted to the very timely shared space concept, focusing on an outstandingly successful project in Poynton in Cheshire, which saw the resolution of traffic problems far greater than any likely to be addressed by shared space in Salisbury. What came across particularly strongly was how vital the involvement of a committed local council member, Howard Murray, had been to what was achieved in Poynton. Another bonus was the appearance again of Ben Hamilton-Baillie, whose excellent talk at the 2004 Open Meeting had led to the Society's streetscape survey, frequently cited as something which those carrying out any kind of study of the public realm locally should be aware of. Like the 2004 one, the 2013 Open Meeting was widely judged to have been one of the most successful in the series. The inevitable question left at the end of it was whether Salisbury could be persuaded to use the ideas demonstrated by it to its own benefit.

**6. 51 High Street.** The Society's report for 2011 recorded the creation of a new sheep, carved by John Marriott and largely funded by the Society, to replace the one above the shopfront to the former SPCK bookshop, by the High Street Gate. Throughout 2012 this had remained in storage, with a new use for the shop proving painfully slow to be forthcoming, but finally in October 2013 the sheep was hoisted into position, and an event to celebrate it was held by Phil Smith, the owner of the hair salon which now occupies the premises. The animal was universally judged to be an absolutely excellent creation,

in the spirit of the original beast but with an additional touch of class. A plaque was designed to go with it, explaining how it had come to be above what were, from the early C20th to 1959, the retail headquarters of a firm known as Stonehenge Woollen Industries, but fixing of the plaque would have to wait till 2014.

**7. Eyesores.** The Society's formal eyesores campaign, aimed at countering visual blight in and around the city, depended on the Salisbury Journal covering particular cases which had been pointed out to it. The paper had seemed to become increasingly wary of featuring anything which might conceivably offend anyone, and after the first half of 2013 had seen no cases published at all, the decision was taken to end the campaign. One case where it was hoped that direct action by the Society would do the trick was the 'Electric House' clock outside Blacks in New Canal, which has a full-page photograph in 'Salisbury in Detail'. During the year a price was obtained to get the clock working properly, and to remedy its increasingly tatty appearance, leaving the question of how to raise the £10,000 or so, plus VAT, which is needed. Unfortunately neither the building's lessees, nor its owners, felt able to come up with the money, for differing reasons, and with no other obvious source of funding in sight, the project had to be put on hold. The Society will continue to try to target eyesores where it can, but it could not be said that 2013 was a year of major achievement in this field.

**8. Awards Scheme.** 2013 saw new buildings being looked at, with a judging panel chaired by Salisbury Playhouse artistic director Gareth Machin. Awards were given to the Diocesan Education Centre in Wilton, Cloudberry House in Donhead St Mary, and a house called The Lynchets in Mere, the last-named being particularly outstanding. Commendations went to the St Paul's community centre, a house at the lower end of Nursery Road, and a library at Wyndham Park School, all in Salisbury, and to Rock Cottage in Chilmark and Latch Cottage in Laverstock. There was some nervousness at the outset that good new buildings might be hard to find this time round, but in fact it was an excellent and varied set of winners.

**9. Involvement with Other Bodies.** The Society continued to be represented on the Salisbury Conservation Advisory Panel, and to be linked to the Salisbury Area Greenspace Partnership. The long-running link with the local CPRE weakened somewhat during the year, with no exchange of representatives between the bodies, but copies of the Society's Quarterly go to the CPRE, with the latter's newsletter coming the other way.

### **Annual Report General Purposes Committee** *(by James Woods).*

The General Purposes Committee (GPC) is responsible for organising lectures, visits, Blue Plaques, Historic Open Days, publicity and quarterly newsletters on behalf of the Salisbury Civic Society. One or two members of the committee lead on each of these subjects, but all members contribute to their choice and discussion. During the year membership of the committee fluctuated: James Woods remained as Chair and Alan Clarke (plaques), Jenni Dougan

(plaques), Jean Lunnon (Historic Open Days), Ron Smith (publicity), Charles Villiers (Quarterly editor) and Lis Woods (minutes) all continued to discharge their responsibilities with commitment and vigour. Four members resigned during the year: Bill Pender, who did not have a portfolio; Judi Cross, who looked after visits; Don Cross, who had no portfolio, but an immense fund of local knowledge; and Marguerite Scott, who had acted as our secretary for many years while at the same time taking care of the other Civic Society committees. Judi Cross's place has been taken by our most recent recruit, Brenda Hunt, who began her work with us in the Spring of this year; and Judy Howles also joined the committee as a most effective Lecture Secretary, thereby relieving the Chairman of his previous portfolio, much to his relief. I can hardly thank all these people enough for their services to the Society's membership.

**Lectures.** Four lectures were given in 2013 in the Sanctuary of Salisbury Methodist Church. In March the local historian and musician, Frogg Moody, assisted by his colleague, Richard Nash, introduced us to a number of Salisbury's most haunted houses. In June Lorraine Knowles of English Heritage invigorated our AGM with an update on progress and a number of justifications for the Stonehenge Visitor Centre. Ruth Newman and Jane Howells introduced us in September to the world of a 19th Century Salisbury glazier, William Small. Finally, in November, the Playhouse archivist, Arthur Millie, gave a most entertaining account of the history of theatre in Salisbury.

**Blue Plaques.** Just one plaque was put up during the year. On Friday 20th November 2013 Richard Griffin unveiled a Blue Plaque on one of the pillars at the formal entrance to Victoria Park in honour of his ancestor, Frederick Griffin, a former Mayor of Salisbury who originated the idea of Victoria Park. After the unveiling of the plaque tea and cakes were served in the Victoria Park Bowls Clubroom.

**Visits.** The highlight of the year was a mystery visit in July, organised by Jennifer Blake with the help of my predecessor as Chair, Wendy English. It started at Houghton's 12th century church with a talk by a church warden, and proceeded, after lunch at the Boot Inn, to Houghton Lodge, with interesting tours of the house, an 18th century "gentleman's cottage", the hydroponicum and the beautiful riverside gardens. Two visits to the Cathedral library in April were oversubscribed and so successful that we are undertaking a varied repeat of them in 2014. Unfortunately the other proposed visit for the year had to be cancelled for lack of interest.

**Historic Open Days, from September 2013.** This year saw a departure from our usual formula for Open Days. Instead we had a Family Quiz, devised by Jean Lunnon with the help of Jennifer Blake and Alan Clarke. It was a bit of fun, quizzing quirky bits of buildings in Salisbury Cathedral Close, based on the Society's publication *Salisbury in Detail*. The event raised the profile of the Society and some new members joined. Rotary and some individual teachers expressed interest in using the quiz, which will, unlike the more traditional Open Days, have an extended shelf life, as it is still available on the Society's website.



## **LEE Hurst Swan School — 100 Years.**

A celebration was held in the Walker Hall at the school to mark its centenary in Campbell Road on Wednesday 14th of May at 3pm with the unveiling of a Blue Plaque by the Salisbury Civic Society. A hundred years earlier on Thursday 14th of May 1914, in the afternoon, the Bishop of Clifton, the Right Revd Dr G A Burton had formally opened the new convent school and dedicated the chapel.

There was a large attendance of pupils and their parents as well as old members and current and previous staff. A Blue Plaque was unveiled for the Civic Society by Lord Congleton, Patron.

Guests were welcomed by Mr Roger Leake, the Headmaster. Councillor Penny Brown gave the initial address in which she included a history of the Mayors of Salisbury with especial mention of the female holders of the office. She was followed by Mr Peter Dunbar, Chairman of the Civic Society and Canon Harold Stephens, Chairman of the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education.

There followed Readings by Archie McEwan, Head Boy, and Zoe Swanwick, Head Girl.

The Centenary Cake was cut by Mrs Dorothy Roblou, one of the oldest surviving former pupils and George Chowdhury, a pupil from the Swan Class. Guests were then entertained to tea and cake served in the Foyer of the Walker Hall.

### **LEE Hurst Swan School, A Centenary History, by Jane Howells.**

The school has a somewhat complicated history and this is well documented and described by Dr Howells. She has found numerous sources of information including comments from those present at each stage in its evolution. Particularly striking, taking advantage of anecdotes and quotations from letters, are the changes in the social atmosphere that has developed in education over the ages.

The school that The Bishop of Clifton opened at Leehurst in 1914 was a convent for girls, a form of education that was commonplace up to beyond the middle of the century. Previous to this a French order of nuns had set up a school in Farnborough with a branch in Salisbury which had had two earlier homes. It was a boarding school for girls, taking some day girls as well as some boys under twelve. Outgrowing their accommodation, they found Leehurst in Campbell Road for sale, then a substantial private house occupied by dentist Horace Farebrother and his wife Katharine. It

is said that the two nuns representing Salisbury and Farnborough, when viewing the property, felt it necessary to dress in secular clothes to avoid possible anti-Catholic prejudice.

In 1953 the nuns from the Congregation of Christian Education returned to Farnborough and the Sisters of La Retraite, another Order originating in France took over. The school's French connections were strengthened. The nuns' association with the school continued until 2005.

The changes of 1953 produced a new affluence to the school as well as a raising of standards. For the girls continuity of forms and grounds helped to ease the unfamiliarity of new teachers with different habits (meaning their clothing). The quality of books, equipment and furnishing improved at once, followed by the building of adequate laboratories. The system of free and subsidised places in operation from the 1950s meant that Roman Catholic girls who had passed the 11+ could go to La Retraite instead of the South Wilts Grammar School for Girls; while this scheme operated it meant that the school could achieve its ambition of providing for pupils of all abilities.

As the years passed there was a gradual change in the ratio between nuns and lay teachers but until 1986 the headmistress was always a sister of La Retraite. Also over the years there has been a major expansion of buildings and facilities, with the creation of a pre-school in 1990. In later years important events were the freedom given to the nuns following the Second Vatican Council of 1962-5, and then a period of falling numbers, rising costs and the withdrawal of support for Catholic girls causing some financial challenges.

### **THE SWAN SCHOOL.**

In 1935 The Swan school was registered as a Pre-Prep school, having arisen from a few (two to start with) boys taught by Evelyn Nancy Swanton to prepare them for Prep School. The boys had informally acquired the name Swan school by common use, a natural reflection of Miss Swanton's name. The school gradually became a prep school in its own right enabling its first candidate to enter Bishop Wordsmith's school in 1950. In May 1949 it had received, as the Crane Street Preparatory School (they had use of the Rechabite Hall), a satisfactory visit by the Ministry of Education. While in Crane Street, Choristers Green in the Close was used as a playing field. The next move was to Milford Street, coinciding with Miss Swanton's marriage to Colonel A R Bare. Professionally she kept her own name as they agreed that 'Mrs Teddy Bare's School' sounded like a 'nursery set-up'. Colonel Bare was 'a tower of strength' taking on some teaching and much of the administration.

Further success and expansion resulted in yet another move, to Elm

Grove Road which had been a boarding house for The Godolphin School, the subject of a painting by Bill Toop. When she reached seventy, Miss Swanton formed a formal partnership with her deputy Mrs Betty Healy. This was confirmed and consolidated so that in 1981 it was reported that the future was secure and prosperous. So it was. However Miss Swanton died unexpectedly in 1986. Although the future of the school was then in some doubt, Mrs Healy decided to continue on her own, in fact adding some major changes: National Curriculum Science, French lessons, music and drama for everyone, including recorder and choir tuition. Cookery was added (this was a boys' school) and a house system adopted. There was increased interaction between the school and boys' families, via a parent teacher association with social gatherings and fundraising.

In the early 1990s the Swan school found itself to be again running out of space and there was increasing pressure on resources due to the changing technology of teaching – and learning. Over the years brothers and sisters had been attending both the Swan School and La Retraite in Campbell Road and there was some sharing of facilities, for example in craft and design. Discreet negotiations during 1995-6 resulted in the surprise announcement that The Swan School for Boys would move to Campbell Road.

The school was initially named 'La Retraite School and The Swan School for Boys' reflecting the schools' separate identities within the combined establishment. The two prep departments were separate for some time but the whole school fused together somewhat faster than anticipated. Initially there had been some 6th form teaching but the arrival of the AS element in the A level curriculum determined the school to end attendance at Year 11, with 6th form teaching being found elsewhere. Now, with the pre-school there is complete provision of schooling from 2-16 years within modern and spacious facilities and attractive grounds.

The book is a fine contribution to understanding the social history of the time and it is hoped that its readership is not limited only to those fortunate to be associated with the school.

*Charles Villiers.*

### ***Leehurst Swan School – a Centenary History***

***Jane Howells.***

***Shire Publications £7.99.***

*To the right:* The upper of the two illustrations opposite is of La Retraite, Leehurst. The lower is a painting of The Swan School for Boys by Bill Toop when it was in Elm Grove Road, about 1963.





















**OFFICERS as at 1st June 2014.****PATRON: The Lord Congleton MA, Hon.LLD.****PRESIDENT: Dame Rosemary Spencer, DCMG.****VICE-PRESIDENTS: Brig Alastair Clark, Maj Gen Roy Dixon,  
Mr ARA Hobson, Mr Ken Wiltshire.****CHAIRMAN: Mr Peter Dunbar****VICE-CHAIRMAN: Mr Richard Deane.****Executive Committee**

Mr Peter Dunbar (Chairman)	p.dunbar212@btinternet.com
Mr Richard Deane	rdeane@madasafish.com
Mrs Judith Payne	judith.payne@hotmail.co.uk
Mr Ron Millar (Treasurer)	ronald.millar@virginmedia.com
Mr Philip Price (Secretary)	philatlarge@hotmail.co.uk
10 The Bramleys, Whiteparish, Salisbury SP5 2TA	
Mrs Marguerite Scott (Membership)	margueritescott@talktalk.net
Mr Mike Smith (Observer)	mike.andcelia@tiscali.co.uk
Dr Charles Villiers	crvilliers@aol.com
Mr James Woods	lisandjames@gmail.com

**Development Committee**

Mrs Judith Payne (Chairman)	judith.payne@hotmail.co.uk
Mr Richard Deane (Secretary)	rdeane@madasafish.com
Mr Ralph Bryder (Streetscape)	ralph.bryder@btinternet.com
Mr David Gregory	david.gregory.architects@googlemail.com
Mrs Melanie Latham	melanielatham56@gmail.com
Mr Leslie Lipscombe	leslie.lipscombe@bopenworld.com
Mrs Nicola Lipscombe	nicola.lipscombe@btinternet.com
Mrs Elaine Milton	emilton@emhp.co.uk
Miss Louise Rendell	louise@stannsgate.com
Mrs Duygu Riley	duyguriley@hotmail.co.uk
Mr James Salman	jamesalaman@designengine.co.uk
Mr Paul Stevens	admin@paulstevensarchitecture.co.uk
Mr Jeremy Turtle	jeremy@j-turtle.co.uk

**General Purposes Committee**

Mr James Woods (Chairman)	lisandjames@gmail.com
Mrs Lis Woods (Secretary)	lisandjames@gmail.com
Mrs Jennifer Blake	jk@blakesaway.F9.co.uk
Mr Alan Clarke (Plaques)	jac314159@mac.com
Mrs Jenni Dougan (Plaques)	jennidougan@hotmail.com
Mrs Judy Howles (Lectures)	howles@ntlworld.com
Mrs Brenda Hunt (Visits)	rogerbren.leach@clara.net
Mrs Jean Lunnon (Open Days)	jeanmabdallahi@hotmail.co.uk
Mr Ronald Smith (Publicity)	dairycottage@gmail.com
Dr Charles Villiers (Quarterly)	crvilliers@aol.com

# LEE Hurst School



The Prep Department of the School (see *page 17*) became appropriately housed following the acquisition of Bowerhill, seen at the bottom of this aerial view. An acquired strip of land provided a path to the main school at the top. St Mark's Avenue is at the bottom of the picture.